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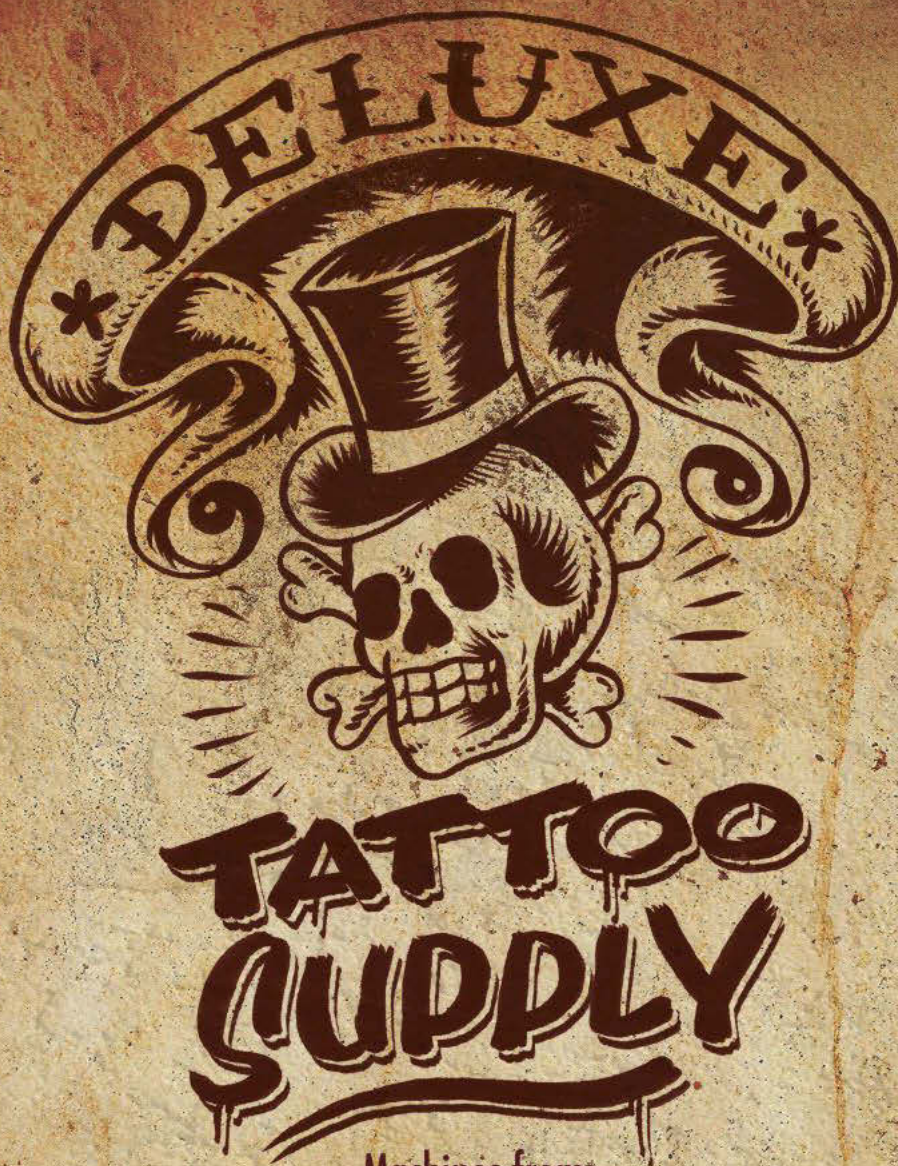
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Paul Talbot from Modern Electric Tattoo

Cover Model: Sarah Mudle

Tattoos: Various artists

Photo: Jenna Kraczek

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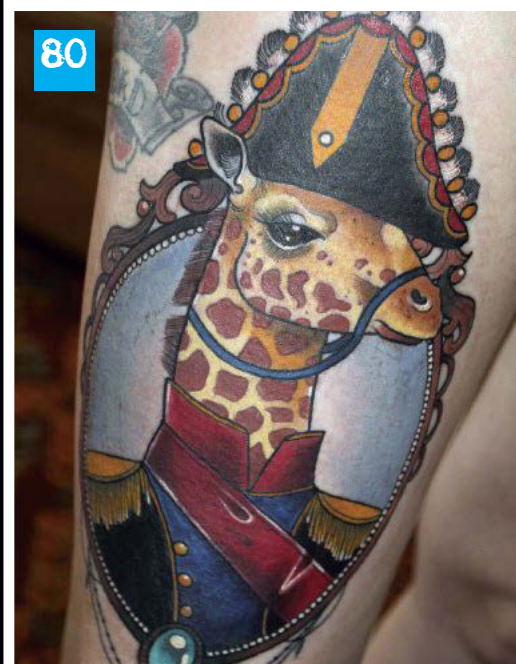
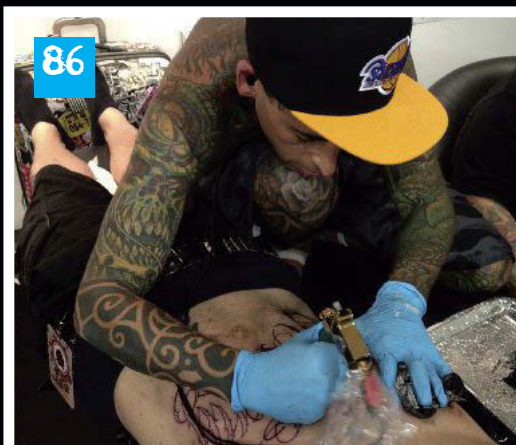
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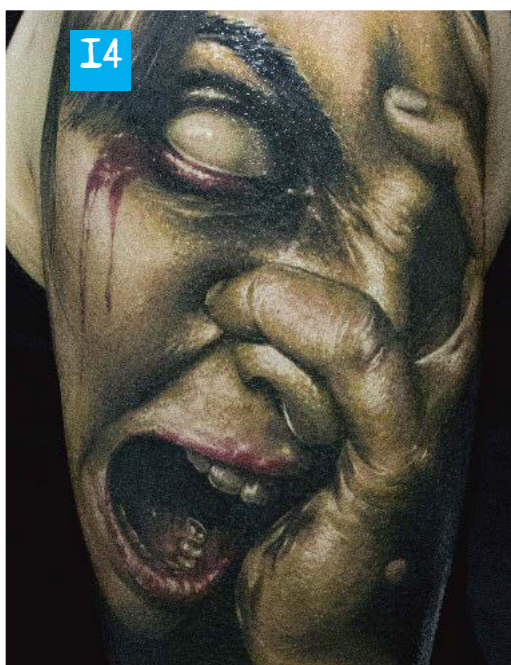
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All winners will be picked at random (or on merit if applicable) after the closing date. Entries received after the closing date will not be considered. The editor's decision is final. Only one entry per person please, and remember to include your name and address. Winners of convention tickets will be responsible for their own transport and accommodation unless stated otherwise. Total Tattoo is not responsible for items lost or damaged in transit – though of course we will try to help if we can.





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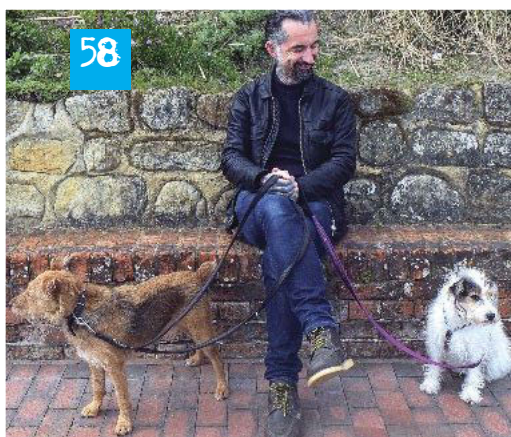
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EDITORIAL 130

Here at Total Tattoo we like to stop now and again, take a breather and review the situation. The months seem to hurtle by, one issue blends into another and everything seems to merge into one. It's really easy to miss something when you are so close to it. So, before putting pen to paper for this month's editorial, I put the last three issues of the magazine on the floor of the office and went through them page by page simultaneously.

Every month the incredibly small and dedicated team that puts the magazine together gives 100% to make sure it is something of which they can be proud. So was that reflected in what I had in front of me?

Let me break down what I found: over those three months we had convention coverage from three different continents, a report from an international disaster zone, an incredible and inspiring story demonstrating the strength of the human spirit and nine interviews with massively talented tattoo artists. We celebrated our own UK tattoo culture by bringing you the in-depth story of the Bristol Tattoo Club, we spoke with authors and illustrators whose work feeds into tattooing and we reported on any issues that may affect tattooing. Plus there were some cool bits and bobs to give away as competition prizes as well.

We know how passionate you, our readers, are about tattooing and we hope that our work reflects that. There is no room for complacency and there is much truth in the old adage 'You are only as good as your last...'

So, as we put the final flourishes to this issue and start to focus on the next one, I really feel we are putting our hearts and souls into Total Tattoo. We are growing with tattooing as it becomes more diverse and fascinating and multi-cultural. I hope you feel the same.

James

editor@totaltattoo.co.uk



'Only the wisest and stupidest of men never change'

Confucius

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NEWS & REVIEWS

Tattoo news and reviews for your delectation and delight. If it goes on in the tattoo world, it goes in here. Send us your news items, books or products for review and items of general curiosity and intrigue for the tattoo cognoscenti.

News, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0AU

BOOK REVIEW

Koi - The Works of Wido Josui de Marval

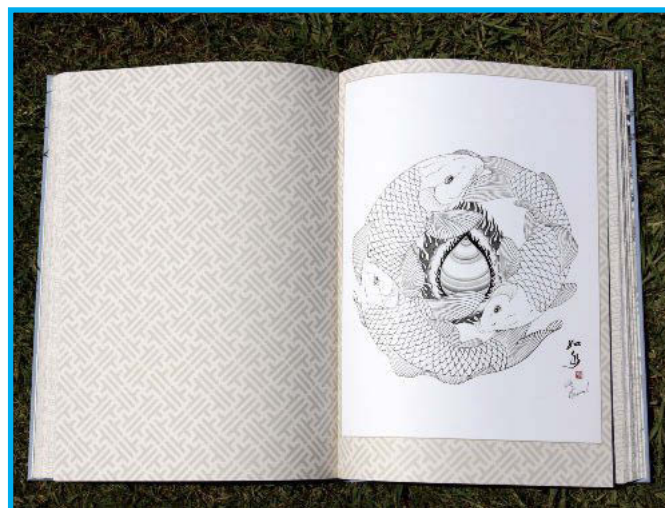
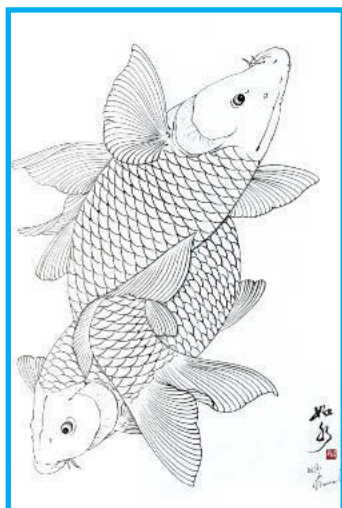
Price: £150

Available from: www.kspublishers.com

Kofuu-Senju Publications has produced another stunning edition in their premium series of Japanese tattoo art and reference books. This new volume focuses on the artwork of Wido Josui de Marval.

The name Josui means 'like water' which is incredibly apt as Wido Josui de Marval has combined his expertise and artistic talent to produce one hundred different koi illustrations for this book. His dedicated approach to the subject matter is demonstrated on each page. The book also features beautiful colour photography by Alex Kofuu Reinke Horikitsune and Matti Senju Horimatsu, which provides a pleasing contrast to the monochrome paintings of de Marval. This gorgeous hardback book contains 224 pages and is produced in a limited edition of just 1000. The whole run will no doubt be snapped up and this collectors' item will only increase in value as the years go by.

Lizzy Longstaff



YOU WON'T REGRET THAT TATTOO

You Won't Regret Watching This

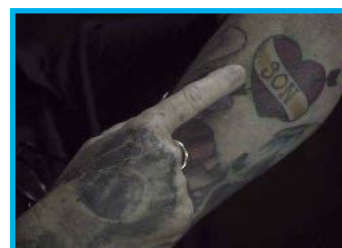
There is one question that every tattooed person gets asked on a regular basis: won't you regret it when you're older? You could do worse than steer anyone who asks you towards the wonderful, heart-warming short film by Angie Bird called 'You Won't Regret That Tattoo'.

The film's premise is to "explore the meanings and memories behind the tattoos of an older generation, and challenge the belief that ink is something we will come to regret" and, believe me, it more than fulfils its aims. By the time I had finished watching, I liked my own tattoos more than ever, and I had an increased respect for tattooing. The film confirms the belief that nobody can force you to have a tattoo, nobody can stop you getting the tattoos you want and nobody has the right to judge you for having them.

I wonder if a similar film was to be made in 30 or 40 years' time, what the generation that is embracing public, visible ink would have to say.

To watch 'You Won't Regret That Tattoo' head to

www.vimeo.com/89546048



WIN TICKETS TO THE INTERNATIONAL LONDON CONVENTION

Once again the mighty London show is bearing down upon us and, as always, it promises to be the ultimate international showcase for tattooing. From September 25th to 27th the great and the good of the tattoo world will descend on the nation's capital as the spotlight falls well and truly on Tobacco Dock, the show's home for the past few years.

As always we will be there to relish this event in all its glory. Why not come along as well and join in the fun. If you have never 'done the London show', you really must. It's an experience not to be missed. If you have been, you know just how good it is and you won't want to miss it this year.

So why not have this one on us. We have six weekend passes to give away. To enter, just email us at comps@totaltattoo.co.uk telling us how many times the International London Tattoo Convention has been held so far. Please use the subject line 'Greatest Show on Earth'. Entries must be in by the 6th August 2015. Terms and condition apply. See page five of this issue for details.

Shoptalk

NEW STUDIO - Hand on Heart

After much hard work and more than a little stress, Luke Naylor has opened his new studio. You can find Hand on Heart Tattoo on the first floor at 20 Rawson Place, Bradford, West Yorkshire. The phone number is **01274 270990**. To check out their work, head to our In Focus feature on page 94 of this issue. We wish you all the best, guys.

ARTIST WANTED - Electric Punch Tattoo are currently looking for another custom artist to join the team at its studio in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. 30 mins from London Liverpool Street Station. The position is for an excellent artist with a strong preference for Black and Grey and Realism. Initially for 2 days a week possibly leading to full time. Must have a minimum 3 years studio experience, be clean, tidy, and punctual with good attitude towards their work and customers (no egos). Email a brief description of your previous experience, contact details together with 5 examples of most recent work to electricpunchtattoo@hotmail.com or through their website: electricpunchtattoo.co.uk

ARTIST WANTED - Eden Street Tattoo are currently seeking a realistic/black and grey artist to join their busy studio. Located in Kingston Upon Thames in a busy town centre location. They have a huge studio with personal stations for each artist, staff kitchen and drawing area and good client base. If interested send 5 examples of your work to truetattoolondon@googlemail.com along with a short paragraph about yourself and previous studios you have worked in.

ARTIST WANTED - Higgins and Co in Eastbourne have a vacancy for a new artist to join their team part time, as Harriet Heath is off to pastures new. They are looking for someone with at least 3 years experience and their own client base, all styles will be considered, please email info@higginsandcotattoo.co.uk with portfolio



CUBAN CLAMPDOWN

In Total Tattoo issue 106 we told you about our good friend and all round top geezer and grumpy old man, Paul from the Vince Ray Experience, who had visited Havana, Cuba. Paul spent some time with the tattoo artists who work there and he shone a spotlight on the incredible challenges they face. At that point, tattooing in Cuba was operating in a somewhat grey area. The deal was you could tattoo customers but not charge them. But all that has recently changed. Rather than becoming more tolerated, tattooing has now been outlawed and nobody seems to know why. Artists including Che Alejandro, with whom Paul stayed, have been forced to put away their machines for good. Cuba has a list of 'approved professions', of which tattooing has never been one. Whether the government ever decide to put it on the list – which means they will be able to raise money from it by charging artists for a license – remains to be seen.



Tony Edwards RIP



We have lost a legend in tattooing.
Tony Edwards, owner of Old Towne Tattoo in Tuscon, Arizona,
recently lost his fight against Lou Gehrig's disease
and pancreatic cancer.

He was a great artist and one of the nicest people
you could hope to meet in the tattoo business.
He was always so level-headed, warm and true to everybody.

A true gentleman.
I will always treasure the time I spent with him.
Rest in Peace, Tony

Henning Jørgensen
Royal Tattoo, Denmark

To watch a great interview with Tony head to
www.youtube.com/watch?v=89siXDUAxyk

THE SKIN BOOK

You've got to love this idea! The Skin Book is quite literally what it says: a cool little notebook with pages made from skin, albeit the artificial variety. Accompanying each page is a body part which can be seen through the artificial skin. This is a clever way to give the budding tattoo artist or apprentice some idea about anatomy and the placement of tattoos. Unfortunately the book is currently just an idea and is not yet in production. It remains to be seen whether it ever goes on the market, but interest is growing. Check it out at www.uk.businessinsider.com/best-sketchbook-for-tattoo-artists-features-pages-made-of-synthetic-skin-2015-6

PUBLIC INFORMATION BROADCAST

According to recent reports in the media, the growing trend for tattoos is one possible reason for a 40% decrease in blood donations. There is no factual research to back this up, but we're not trying to pick a fight here. A spokesman from the NHS said "Lots of people think that if you have a tattoo you can't donate blood at all. There are people who had tattoos many years ago and they believe they can't give blood because of it." Just to clear things up, the NHS guidelines say that people who have had a tattoo within the last four months are unable to give blood but, after that, you're good to go.

LARD YAO PETER

The Movie

Another short film that recently became available online is 'Lard Yao Peter', directed edited and produced by Josh Z. Northover. The film runs for a little over six minutes and, in essence, shows Peter telling the incredible story of how he went from junkie to tattoo artist during the four years he spent in the infamous Lard Yao prison, aka 'The Bangkok Hilton', in Thailand. This little movie is both moving and honest, and a great piece of short film making. Catch it at www.vimeo.com/129361623



FOUR STARS FOR KENT

A new hygiene ratings system for tattoo parlours has been introduced across Kent, along the lines of the ones used for restaurants and take-aways. Although not compulsory, tattoo studios that opt in will be given a star rating for hygiene. In my opinion, a one-star rating means 'Get the hell out of there' and the top four-star rating is the only acceptable standard.

The artistic merit of any tattoo is in the eyes of the beholder, of course, but hygiene is not. It's the very least any professional tattooist owes their customers. As long as the inspectors in Kent know what they are looking for, and the studios know what is expected of them, this new initiative seems like a good thing but only time will tell.

BRIGHTON TATTOO CONVENTION DATES

Brighton Tattoo Convention is pleased to announce their next convention will take place on the Bank Holiday weekend of 30th April to 1st May 2016. As well as a change of date, the event moves to a new venue, The Brighton Centre just a few metres along the seafront from its previous home. The new location offers a light, airy interior, a huge exhibition space and panoramic sea views. For the first time they are releasing a limited run of Early Bird Tickets which go on sale 1st July 2015. Check out their blog for all the latest news blog.brightontattoo.com



YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD

We at Total Tattoo wish to tip our metaphorical hat to 94-year-old great grandma Gwladys Williams, who has recently become the oldest women in the UK to get a tattoo. Gwladys was a late bloomer in tattoo terms, getting her first ink – a memorial to one of her daughters – at the age of 87. Tattoo number two, done in June this year, was all about the love she has for her granddaughter Leri Ann, with whom she is very close. The tattoo reads 'Leri & Nain Forever' (*Nain* being the Welsh word for grandma). It was done by Sascia Angel Marques of Inkvasion in Blaenau-Ffestiniog, Wales. Gwladys apparently sat like a rock whilst being tattooed. Respect to the super-nan!



Who are ya...

We just love receiving your pictures of the amazing tattoos you guys are girls are doing, and in these modern times it's faster and easier to send them by digital means.

You can email high res photos to gallery@totaltattoo.co.uk but please please please ensure that you put the artist name and studio name on all the files that you send. Do keep em coming!

LINKYS

Here is this month's selection of web links, containing a wide range of tattoo snippets for you to enjoy. **If you know of a good Linky** that you think our readers would like, drop us a line to editor@totaltattoo.co.uk putting Linkys as your subject.



Mike Tattoo – A moving little film

<https://vimeo.com/129742907>



Excellent interview with Cindy Ray

www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-20/meet-australias-first-tattooed-lady/6483696



Time Lapse Tattoo by Lio Faamasino

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUXWd8L4cXI



Cool little video of Kustom Kulture Forever event

<https://vimeo.com/130109914>

(Spot Total Tattoo's Perry. Keep your eyes peeled at about 1:38)



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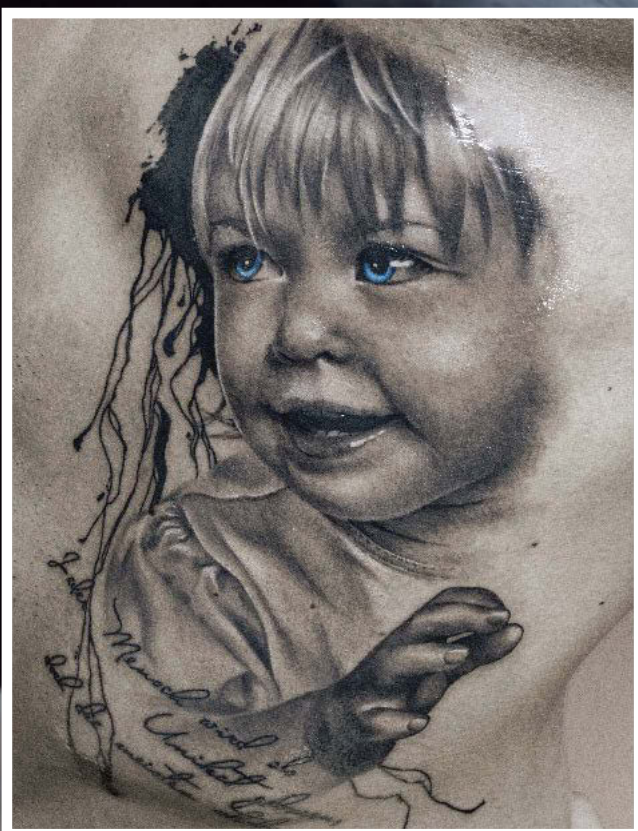
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Interview: Travellin' Mick
 Photos: Travellin' Mick, Philip Rohrbeck and Zsafia Belteczky/Invictus





Zsolia Belteczky

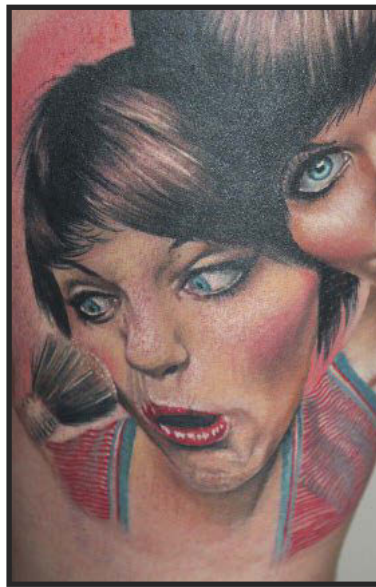
Zsolia Belteczky works at tattoo conventions all over the world. Her beautiful face is frequently seen smiling down from the event posters, but she also wins trophy after trophy for her outstanding realistic tattoos. Though originally from Hungary and owner of her own studio in Budapest, Zsolia is often to be found working at Invictus Tattoo in Berlin.

Travellin' Mick: Zsolia, you are part of a 'third generation' of Hungarian tattooists. There were the pioneers, like Boris or Zsolt Sarközi in the 1990s; then came guys like Sandor Nyiri and Csaba Müllner, the local heroes of the 2000s; and now there is a veritable explosion of talented young artists, many of whom work away from Hungary, at least for part of the time. You were born in Budapest and tattoos are part of everyday life there now, aren't they? Did you grow up in an atmosphere where tattoos were more acceptable than they previously were in Hungary?

Zsolia Belteczky: Well, when I told my parents years ago that I want to become a tattooist, they told me that I would have to move out of their house... even if I got a single tattoo! But it didn't turn out like that. They are proud of me now.







TM: You can't exactly hide your tattooed hands and neck from them, can you? Do you know what changed their mind?

ZB: When they saw that I could make a living as a tattooist, and they realised that this is a profession with a future. Anyway, they wouldn't have been able to stop me. I always did what I wanted to.

TM: Do you see your style as 'typically Hungarian'? Many of your compatriots also excel at realistic colour tattooing, done with a fantasy twist.

ZB: Let's just call it realistic. For me this style developed naturally, as I was always surrounded by artists of this genre. My base for studying was Guy Aitchison's book 'Reinventing the Tattoo' in which he described a realistic style without much outline. We live in a time where there are no tattoo secrets any more: we have knowledge passed down from the Old Schoolers, better equipment and are open to new developments and techniques.

TM: Absolutely, but how did you get this far in your career so quickly? It is not that hard to become a reasonable tattooist, but how do you exceed that and become a great one?

ZB: Artistically, I follow my instinct. Technically, it is important to read the customer's skin correctly. It takes experience to judge the individual type of skin, and how to adapt your tattooing technique to it. You learn with practice. After it's been on the skin a year or so, you should be able to judge if a tattoo was applied well and is standing the test of time.





TM: What does your 'perfect tattoo' look like?

ZB: A tattoo that triggers something in me, awakens an emotion. I want to approach a tattoo like a painting, seeing the bigger picture, not just the details. Ideally, a customer comes to me with an idea. I then talk to them about it, add my thoughts and try to find the best way to turn it into reality. Luckily, most of my clients now trust me enough, especially in Hungary, where there is no language barrier. For example, recently somebody wanted a tattoo of a popular classical Roman or Greek statue. This has been done too many times, but I found a series of photos of models who were dressed and posed exactly like those historic artworks. Now we are doing one of those as a photorealistic tattoo!

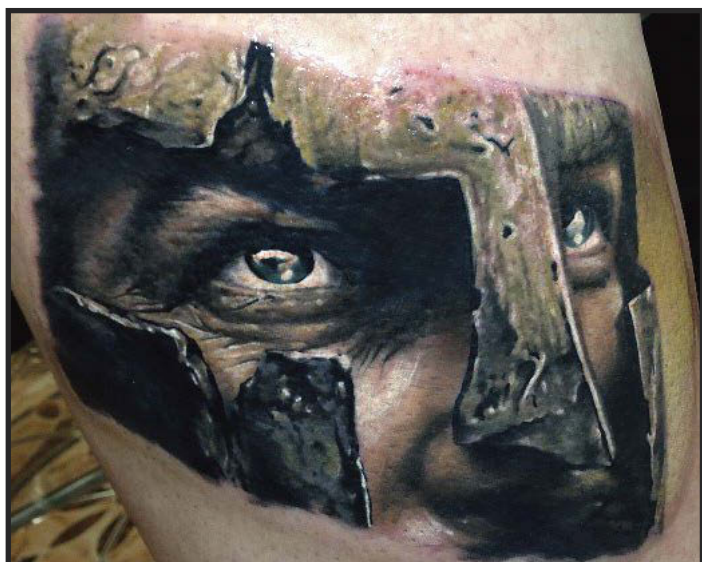
TM: You often work in Berlin, where customers tend to be a bit spoilt and rather critical. Do they trust you enough to let you work on larger projects?

ZB: Yes, I am starting to do bigger tattoos there too. The clients in Berlin do tend to care more about details and want to influence the outcome more than elsewhere! It makes it a bit harder to create real artworks, when they ask you to add a name here and a date there...



TM: You have only been tattooing for a few years and – as we can see from all the adverts with your face on – you are loyal to Cheyenne rotary machines. Did you ever work with old-fashioned coil machines?

ZB: You know, I'm just a girl. I have no idea about the technical things. Tattoo machines are magic, right? Just kidding! I did start with coil machines, and I know a lot about them. I can take them apart, repair them and put them back together, no problem. But rotaries are quieter, lighter, don't vibrate, and I think I can work softer and faster with them. The ink goes into the skin more easily. But a tattoo machine is just a tool for me.



TM: And why are you using the new Cheyenne Pen, in particular? This machine is shaped like a thick pen. Wasn't it tricky to change to a tool that is not the usual L-shape?

ZB: It's actually more comfortable, almost natural to me. After a few sessions I was used to it. Look, I have been tattooing with L-shaped machines for only a few years, but I have been writing with a pen for twenty!.

TM: You often work at conventions. What attracts you to that? How do you find working in huge halls, full of people and noise?

ZB: Yes, I love conventions, even though it's a bit uncomfortable sometimes. I go because of the contests. I want to compete with other tattoo artists and I want to win! It's like a sport to me and I'm very ambitious about it. I plan my appointments ahead of every convention so I can do tattoos that match the contest categories on each day. In Hungary, we have lots of drawing competitions in school and I often took part in those... and won!



TM: Any other goals or ambitions?

ZB: Yes, I want to beat the Guinness World Record for the most tattoos in 24 hours!

TM: That's over 800, isn't it? You really are ambitious!

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The Skuses from Bristol are one of the most famous families in the modern history of tattooing. Last month we brought you the story of Les Skuse and the birth of the Bristol Tattoo Club. This month we focus on his sons Bill and Danny, in a fascinating conversation with Danny's son Jimmie.



BRISTOL TATTOO CLUB

PART 2: THE NEXT GENERATION

Les had five children – four boys and a girl. Bill (born in 1933) and Danny (born in 1938) both followed him into tattooing. By all accounts, these two brothers were like chalk and cheese. Bill viewed the tattoo world in a very business-like manner. Danny was more like his father, preferring the artistic approach even if it was less profitable.

Bill started tattooing early in life. After a brief stint in the Merchant Navy on National Service he returned to Bristol to pick up his machines again. Les had been looking around for a suitable shop for his son to work in, and had actually been offered the chance to buy Jessie Knight's father's studio in Cardiff (for the princely sum of £25, including all the equipment!) but had turned it down. So Bill's career took a different direction. Jimmie picks up the story...

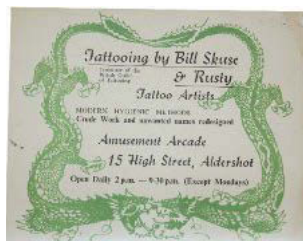
Danny & Bill Skuse
Brighton Arcade 1961



"My Uncle Bill decided to join the fairgrounds and travel around tattooing out of the back of a caravan. He did that for several years, until the opportunity came up to work in the army town of Aldershot (in the amusement arcade, in the booth vacated by Jessie Knight when she moved to Portsmouth). Just before Uncle Bill went down there, a young lady had been sent from the family to marry my dad – we come from gypsy blood – but she ended up marrying Uncle Bill instead! That was my Auntie Carol. As kids we loved visiting Uncle Bill's place in Aldershot. The booth was so small we couldn't all fit in, so they used to give us money to play on the arcade machines to keep us out of the way. At one time there was a plan for my dad to work there too, but the family who owned the arcade also had a premises in Brighton and he went there instead... and that's where I was made."



Original Bill & Rusty Skuse
business cards



Above: Rusty with Stan
Davies
Left: Rusty Skuse in the
Aldershot Arcade

Alongside tattooing, Bill Skuse also ran a successful photography business. His tattoo pictures sold all over the world and he built friendships with the likes of Sailor Jerry, Huck Spaulding and Doc Forrest. Many of Bill's photos were of his second wife Rusty, who was recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as Britain's most tattooed woman.

Bill first tattooed the young Janet (Rusty) Field when she was in the army, and in the late 1960s she began to work with him. Romance blossomed, Bill's marriage to Carol broke up, and Bill and Rusty tied the knot in 1976. "Being a female tattooist and heavily tattooed, Rusty was well known," Jimmie continues. "With Uncle Bill's photos of her, and the Guinness Book of Records, she became incredibly famous. She was one of the pin-up girls of tattooing at that time."

Bill definitely inherited the Skuse gene for collecting. He would send tattoo photos to famous artists, they would return the favour, and he would collate the pictures into sets, helping to spread tattoo designs all around the world. He also had a vast archive of tattoo business cards – one of the biggest ever – which now forms a significant part of Hanky Panky's collection in Holland.



Danny 'Les' Skuse Junior business cards



Rusty Skuse with Dick Emery (publicity photo for the film 'Ooh you are awful...')

I had heard that Bill was an abrupt and sometimes difficult character, so I asked Jimmie if this was true. "A lot of people thought he was blunt," he tells me. "If you were dirty he would refuse to tattoo you. He'd say 'It only costs a pound for some deodorant, boy', or 'Sorry mate, you can't afford a tattoo if you can't afford a bar of soap!' He was a quiet man who didn't suffer fools gladly. He was a great craftsman and could do a good tattoo, but he wasn't as artistic as my dad and he wasn't as sociable as my granddad."



Bill Skuse

"Eventually Uncle Bill got fed up with the tattoo world," Jimmie continues. "He and Rusty moved to Norfolk to open a dog kennels, but that never really took off. He got a job cleaning the car park for Bernard Matthews instead, which he really loved. They had two cottages next door to each other, in Dereham. Bill lived in one and Rusty lived in the other, where she continued to tattoo. Bill died of cancer in 1994, but nobody told the family. My dad only found out via some rumours at a tattoo convention. Rusty died in 2007 after a long battle with kidney disease."



Rusty Skuse, at home in Norfolk, in the studio in Aldershot and with Bill

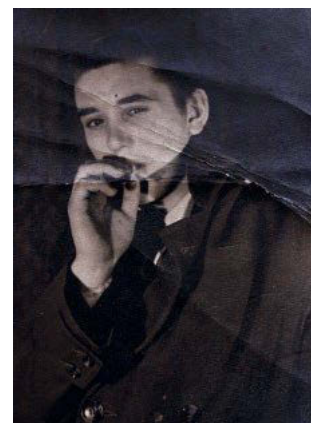




Danny Skuse 1953

Our conversation then turns to Danny Skuse, Jimmie's father. "When my dad left school he did various jobs, including building work, to make ends meet," Jimmie tells me. "He had a trial for Bristol Rovers football club and he was also a good boxer. He loved to fight. Back then you'd have a punch-up with someone on the Friday and by Monday you'd be best mates again. My dad was always interested in tattooing, even as a kid.

My granddad taught him of course. Ron Ackers and Johnny O'Brian were always round our place, and my dad went to work with them for a while up at the Bullring. He also worked in my granddad's shop. He would sit there all night – just in case someone turned up wanting a tattoo. That's how he was. He never wanted to let anybody down. He always worked seven days a week. On Wednesdays he'd do appointments, but if he didn't have any appointments he would take mum to a department store for a spot of lunch. That was their little treat. Apart from that, all he ever did was tattoo."

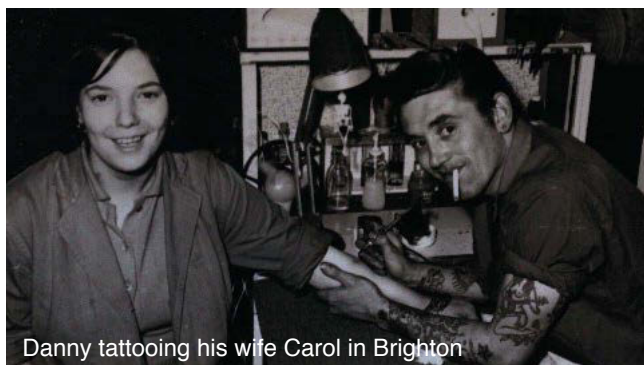


I asked Jimmie to tell me more about their time in Brighton. "My mum worked on the penny rollers," he tells me, "and during the winter months they would be almost starving while they waited for the summer holidaymakers to come back. One day my dad was sitting in the tattoo shop and this bloke comes in and asks how business is. 'Very quiet,' he says. 'Not much work about.' The bloke tells him not to worry, says things will pick up, and then leaves. Soon after, another bloke comes running in and says 'You know who that was? It was Jack Spot!' Now Jack Spot was a famous gangster in those parts. Protection rackets were rife, and the very next day two guys walk into my dad's shop saying 'We've come for some money'. Quick as a flash my dad replies, 'Hang on. I can't pay you *and* Jack Spot'. Straight away they legged it, and my dad never had any more trouble from any protection rackets again."

Danny Skuse saves woman's life

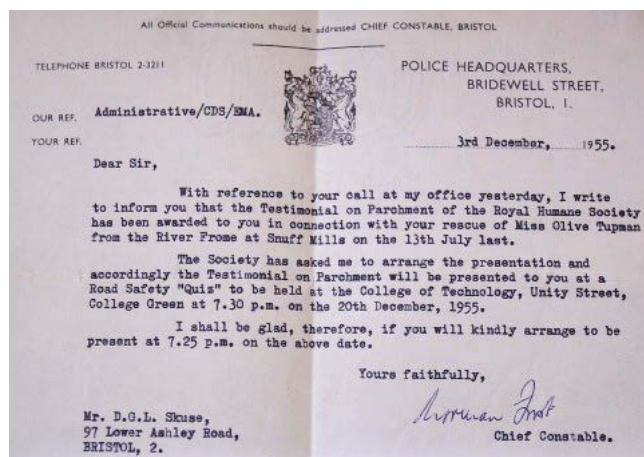


In 1955 when he was 17, Danny dived into the Frome river to save a woman from drowning and won recognition from the Chief Constable of Bristol



Danny tattooing his wife Carol in Brighton

"Once," Jimmie recalls, "my Uncle Bill visited us in Brighton. He tattooed a star on my dad's ear. I remember my dad telling me it was the first time he really felt he had a brother." This prompts Jimmie to talk briefly of his own brother. "He's very like my Uncle Bill," he tells me, "whereas I'm more like my dad. My brother and I don't talk as often as we should. He went into the Foreign Legion and I only see him a couple of times a year."

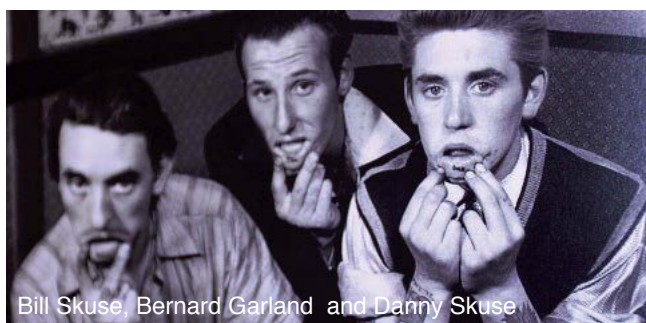


When Les began to get ill, Danny left Brighton and returned to Bristol to help him out. Bill, being the oldest, had always believed he would inherit the shop from his father, but Les change his will just before he died and left the shop to Danny instead. Bill inherited the antiques and the tattoo collection and in fairness these would probably far outweigh the tattoo shop in value today, but at the time it would have caused some bitterness.

Jimmie has some great stories about his dad. He tells me how Danny used to work with Ron Ackers, and how the two of them would travel to conventions together. "My dad would call Ron to check what he needed to bring. 'You don't need to bring colour Dan. I've got it sorted,' Ron would tell him. When they arrived at the convention, my dad would say, 'Where's the colour, Ron?' and Ron would reply, 'Ask that bloke over there if he can lend us some red...' and ask that one over there for some yellow...', and so on. That's how they were. If Steve Crane from Global Supplies was at the show, they would be forever borrowing power packs, machines and all manner of stuff, and Steve was always kind and treated them with great respect."



Al Schiffley with Bill and Danny Skuse 1955

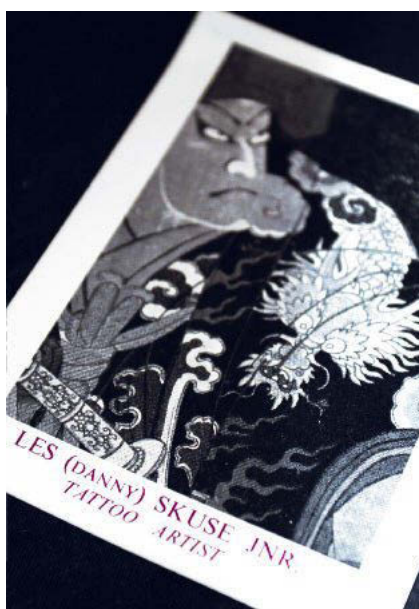
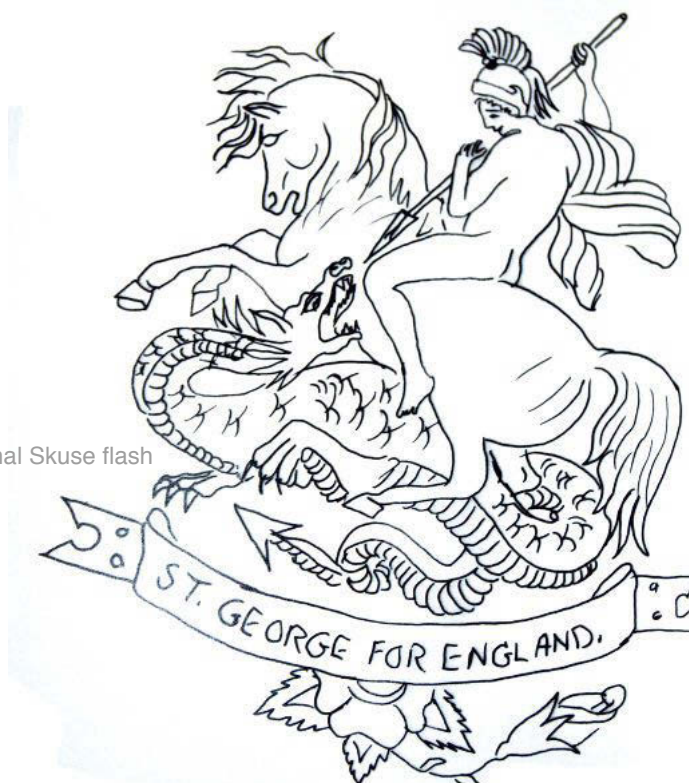


Bill Skuse, Bernard Garland and Danny Skuse



Danny Skuse in his pick-up 1977

Original Skuse flash



Danny Skuse business card

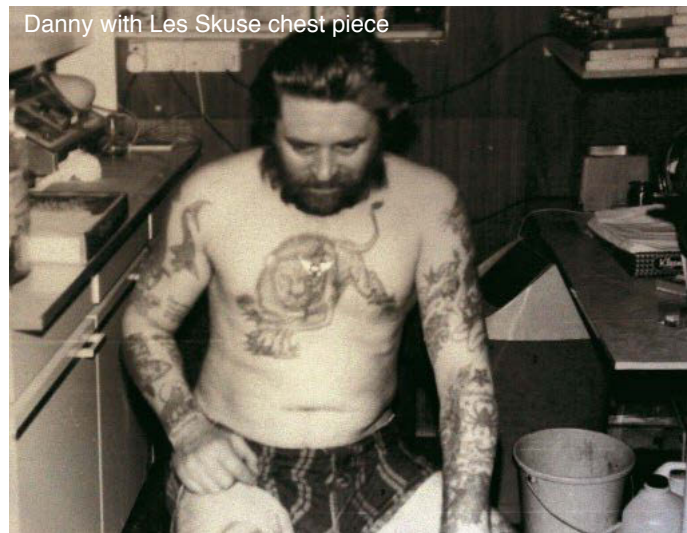
Later in his life, people began to recognise the important role that Danny Skuse had played in the story of tattooing. He was a guest of honour at conventions all over the world. "Lovely young ladies would come up and kiss him and say what a pleasure it was to meet him," Jimmie recalls. "That's not happening for me yet... but you never know. Maybe some day!"

Jimmie also tells me about Danny's great friendship with Dave Ayres and Ozzy of Bristol tattoo shop Skin Deep. On one occasion, when Danny had been invited to a convention in Japan, he went to tell them about the proposed trip. "Dave said, straight away, 'We're coming with you'. And so they all went. "My dad loved Dave and Ozzy like they were his own sons. And they loved him. Dave and my dad were quite similar in character. Had they been the same age there might have been fireworks, but somehow they got on. Dave and Ozzy always made sure that anything my dad needed, he got. I couldn't say a bad word about them."

Danny finally decided to retire from tattooing in 1990. He was still working out of his father Les's old shop, but Bristol had changed. Other studios had opened in better parts of the city, younger artists were taking the craft to new heights, and the traditional designs associated with old school tattooists were seemingly out of fashion. I ask Jimmie what Danny would make of the tattoo world today. "He wouldn't understand these kids with tattoos all over their faces and necks. Or the number of girls with tattoos all over their legs," he says, then he goes on to make a very interesting point. "Kids nowadays think old school tattooing is big bold lines – but that's only how it looks after a long time, when it has spread in the skin. For instance, if you look at the later photos of Rusty taken by Paul Callaby [*body art photographer for Skin Deep and Total Tattoo Magazine – Ed*] it looks like she had a blue body. But *proper* English old school was single-needle line work. What will a thick lines done with a nine needle today spread to in twenty years' time? *That's* the difference between a young artist without the benefit of experience and someone like my dad who'd seen all the mistakes and learnt from them."

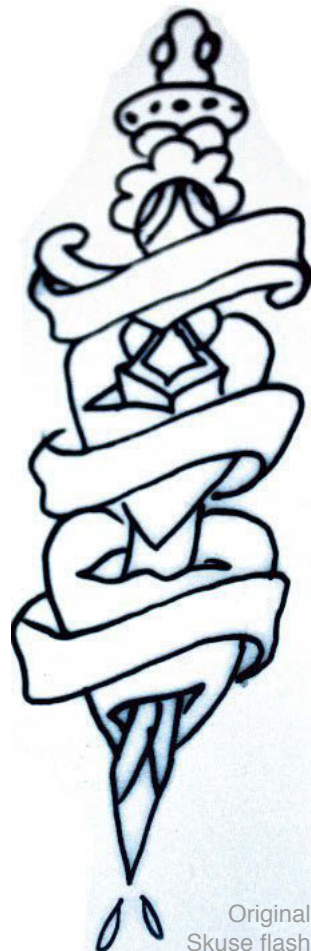


Danny at Les's old Studio in 71 Mina Road



Danny with Les Skuse chest piece

"My dad died in the early hours of 26th June 2009," Jimmie tells me. "He'd suffered for a long time with lung cancer and he died of pneumonia. A little while before, we'd taken him to a fishing tackle shop in town. He'd seen a nice rod he wanted, and he'd kept going on about it, and we'd finally persuaded him to buy it. But the night he gets taken into hospital he says to me, 'You ought to take that rod back to the shop and get a refund. I don't reckon I'll be using it for a while.' He lay there with a mask on for two days and we all sat around watching the monitors. It was fucking awful. Just waiting for him to die."



Original
Skuse flash



Jimmie regrets not recording more of the stories that Danny told him over the years. There's one that he feels really sums up the kind of person he was. "My mum used to work in a shoe shop in Bristol and one of her male colleagues started to take a bit too much of an interest in her. My dad decided this wasn't good, so he borrows a gun from someone he knows and pops into the shoe shop. He sits down to try on a pair brogues, the bloke kneels down to help him, and my dad he pulls the gun out and tells him in no uncertain terms to stay away from my mum. My mum knew nothing about this, and so she never did quite understand why the bloke suddenly started avoiding her. That's how my dad was. He loved his family and he did everything to look after us."

Danny outside the
Brighton studio
1961



Danny tattooing
in Brighton



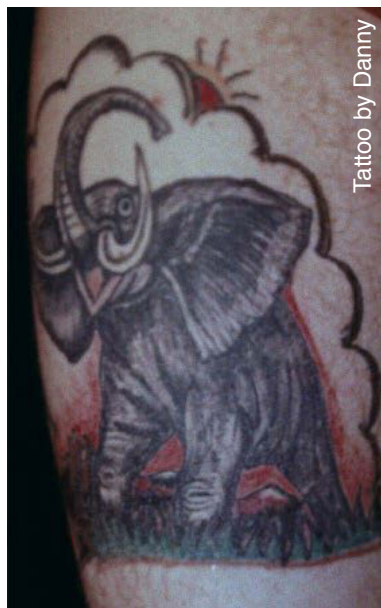
Being a Skuse carries a certain amount of responsibility and each family member handles it differently. Jimmie tells me how Danny explained this to him. "My dad said, 'Well son, it's like this. Granddad was the captain of the ship and I was his first mate. Now that he's gone, I'm the captain and you're first mate. One day you'll be the captain.' My granddad promoted tattooing on a global scale," Jimmie continues. "He created the Bristol Tattoo Club, which was something tattooists all over the world wanted to be part of. My dad worked with the Guild of Tattooists, which campaigned for better working practices and improvements in the law, but he was never really into the Bristol Tattoo Club and he didn't spend much time promoting it. During his time, it kind of stagnated. He was a great artist and he used to paint too. He just loved to work. Dad and Uncle Bill sold off or gave away pretty much all of granddad's collections – business cards, machines, the lot. At the time I didn't mind. I was busy with my family and dad and Uncle Bill needed the money. Now, though, I wish I'd taken more of an interest. I would love to have some of the family stuff back."



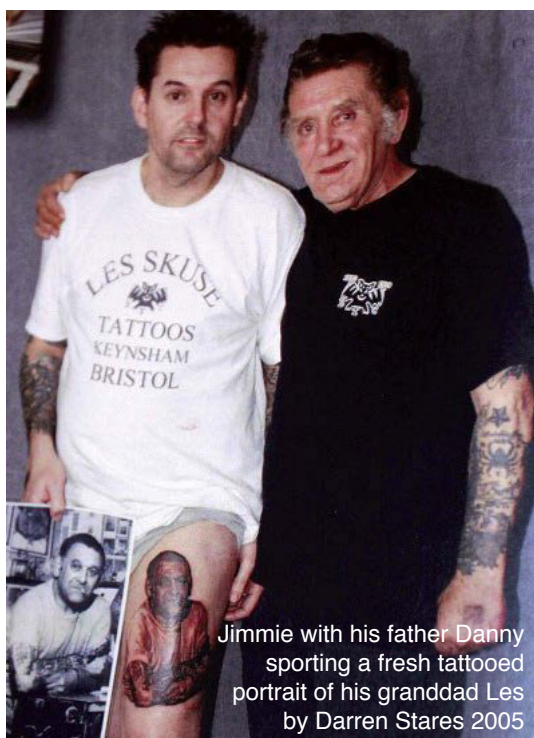
"In the war," Jimmie tells me, "my granddad built a metal cage in the basement of his house in case the bombers came over. One night the air raid siren goes off. My gran was at the front door and a bloke runs past and shouts, 'Come on lady, get down the shelter'. But she doesn't go to the communal shelter. She goes down to the cage in their basement instead. And that night the communal shelter took a direct hit. Everyone in it was killed. After that, my granddad tattooed all his kids so that if they got killed someone would be able to identify the bodies. My dad had Spot the Dog on his arm – an old Hartley design. In fact all of us were tattooed as children," Jimmie tells me. "We all have the 'Skuse dot'. My own kids have it as well."



Joe Hartley design 'Spot' by Les on a young Danny, done during the war



Danny at Tom Ptolemy's 'Mad Hatters Tea Party'



Jimmie with his father Danny sporting a fresh tattooed portrait of his granddad Les by Darren Stares 2005



Replica machines available from www.bristolattooclub.co.uk and killerink.com

Next month: In Part 3 of the story of the Skuse family we look at Jimmie Skuse and the future of The Bristol Tattoo Club.

Anyone interested in joining the Bristol Tattoo Club should contact Jimmie through the website at www.bristolattooclub.co.uk

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LIVERPOOL TATTOO CONVENTION

The Liverpool Tattoo Convention has been running for eight years now, the last six of which have been at the shabby chic, über-kitsch Adelphi Hotel in the heart of the city. It's a fantastic, unique venue and in so many ways has helped the Liverpool show forge its well-earned reputation as one of the UK's top conventions. One of the other things that has driven it forward has been the constant innovation by organiser Ant and his crew from the Design 4 Life Tattoo Studio. It's always been a show packed with entertainment, with a first class list of artists to bring it all together, and this year was no exception.

As always the convention started at a sedate pace with Artists' Friday, when the show is closed to members of the public. This gives tattooists time to get tattooed, catch up with friends, share ideas and maybe raise a glass or two of the reasonably priced refreshments.

A day ticket for the Liverpool Convention costs £20, making it by no means the cheapest tattoo show on the block but, when you look at what you get for the price, it starts to look like good value for money. The first thing that happens when you hand over your hard-earned wonga is a programme is shoved into your sweaty little paw. You might then choose to head to the bar for a pint of something cold and refreshing, which will be your first pleasant surprise at only £1.70 a pint!

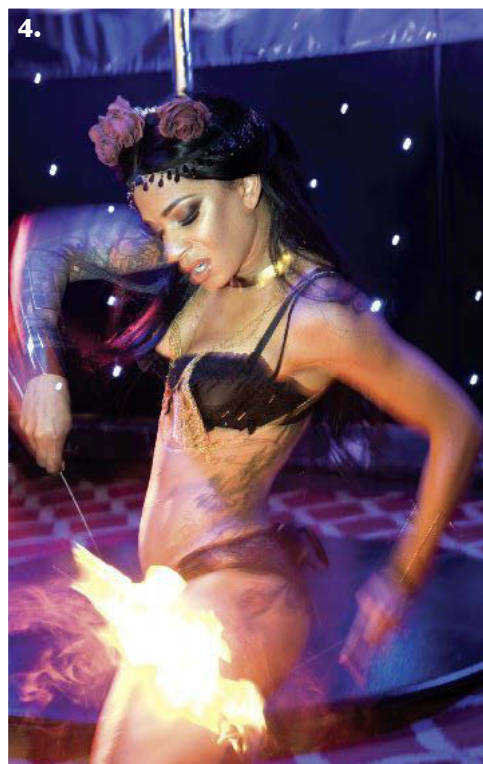
Once you have picked yourself up off the floor, your attention will probably turn to the programme. If you are going to try and wring every last drop of enjoyment out of your day, you will need to keep it with you at all times. In extreme emergencies you could

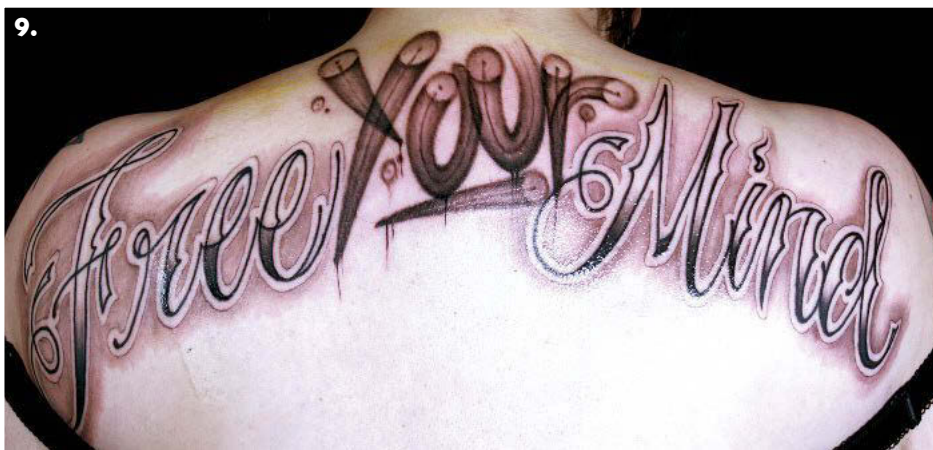
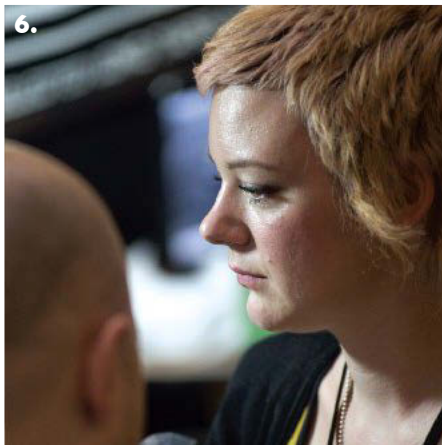
tear it in two and shove it in your ears in an attempt to block out Chris Cross, the show's wise-cracking compère. (Sorry Chris!)

There were bands playing all day in the hotel bar, as well as an acoustic area between rooms in the main body of the show. On the stage (which made a welcome return to its natural home this year after being banished to the basement last year) there was also plenty of worthwhile entertainment goodness. The ever-popular Fuel Girls were there playing with fire, gyrating on poles and generally raising the temperature of the room. The traditional tattoo convention fare of the freak show made a comeback with the Blood and Bones Circus, and a human beat box crew also drew the crowds. The tattoo duels were as popular as ever, with this year's losers ending up in the stocks getting pelted with wet sponges by the winners. Also this year for the first time we were treated to Paul (Vince Ray) Jacobs taking to the stage along with his Clap-o-meter (not what you think!) to present the 'Mr Beardy Competition' – a contest for the hirsute and well-groomed convention attendees.

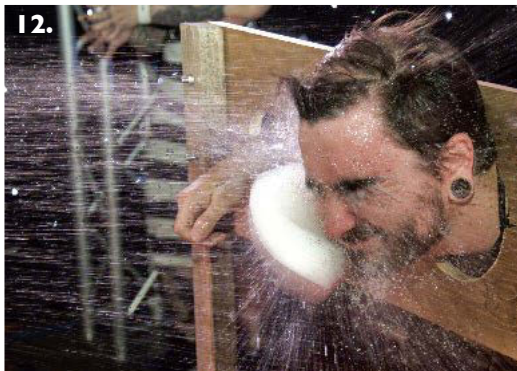
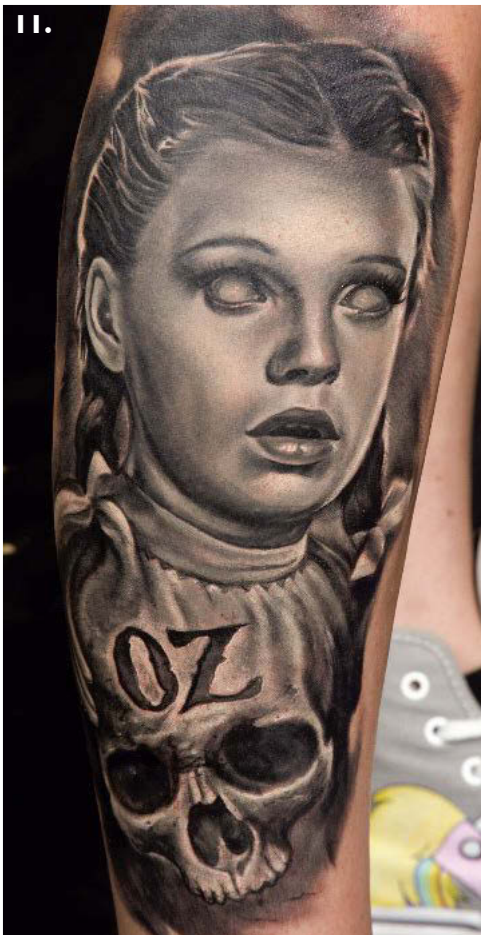


1. **mr beardy**
2. **juliet preston, inkarma**
3. **ben ormerod, rogues gallery**
4. **fuel girls doing their thing**





- 5. by sam ford, silver needles
- 6. sam ford
- 7. don't try this at home
- 8. by samantha barber, sam barber tattoo
- 9. by josh eaves, this mortal coil
- 10. by chantale coady, picture house tattoo



When it comes to the tattoo artists present, there seemed to be almost a 'changing of the guard' this time around. Many of the familiar faces had opted out, which opened the door for some new ones. It's always been the way with conventions: waves of new artists come through as established ones take a step back. The Liverpool Convention has always been a good barometer for these things and it feels like we are about to go through another transition period.

I can't finish up without mentioning probably the most controversial idea this show has come up with: 'Banana tattoo', a stall where anybody could rock up and, with a bit of coaching, have a go at tattooing the said fruit's lovely yellow skin. There were definitely mixed reactions to this, ranging from 'Am I bothered?' to 'I won't be working this show next year'. I'm not too sure if this will become a trend, but stranger things have happened. Let us know what you think? (*Email your thoughts to editor@totaltattoo.co.uk*)

Every now and then, it's good practice to take a few steps back to figure out what we want, where we want to go and how the hell we are going to get there. That goes for anything in life, even a tattoo convention. Liverpool is a great show with bags of energy, effort and love poured into it but, for me, this year it wasn't quite firing on all cylinders. Perhaps the Adelphi has played its part in the show's development and now it's time to move on. It's always exciting heading to a new venue and this is one show that I am sure will take its fan base with it. Having said that, the Adelphi Hotel would be a very hard act to follow.

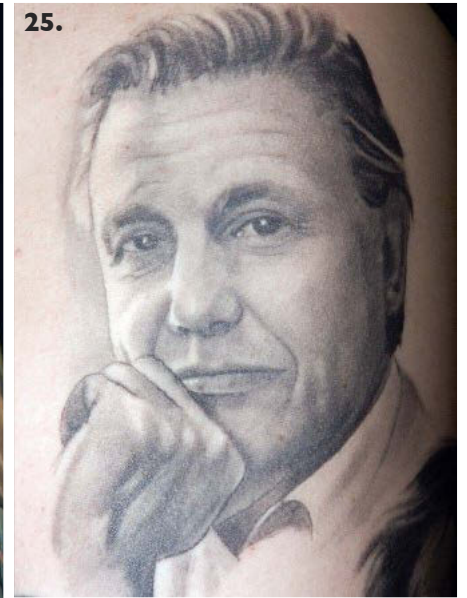
- 11. by tim and jordan croke, second skin
- 12. jordan croke getting it in the kisser
- 13. by inky joe, illustrated primate
- 14. by joe phillips, vere street tattoos
- 15. by dan stone, electric buddha
- 16. dan stone working



24.



25.



26.



27.



28.



29.



17. jakub hendrix golebiewski, inkpire tattoo

18. by mark boyle, nothing sacred

19. by gordon patterson, honest ink

20. by tanane whitfield, studio evolve (usa)

21. by thomas pollard, skynyard

22. pole dancing fuel girl

23. tanane whitfield, not pole dancing

24. by leah moule, spear tattoo

25. by jammes, jammes tattoo

26. the beat box boys

27. by alex rattray, red hot and blue

28. by julie wheatley, dabs tatoo

29. alex rattray with trophy

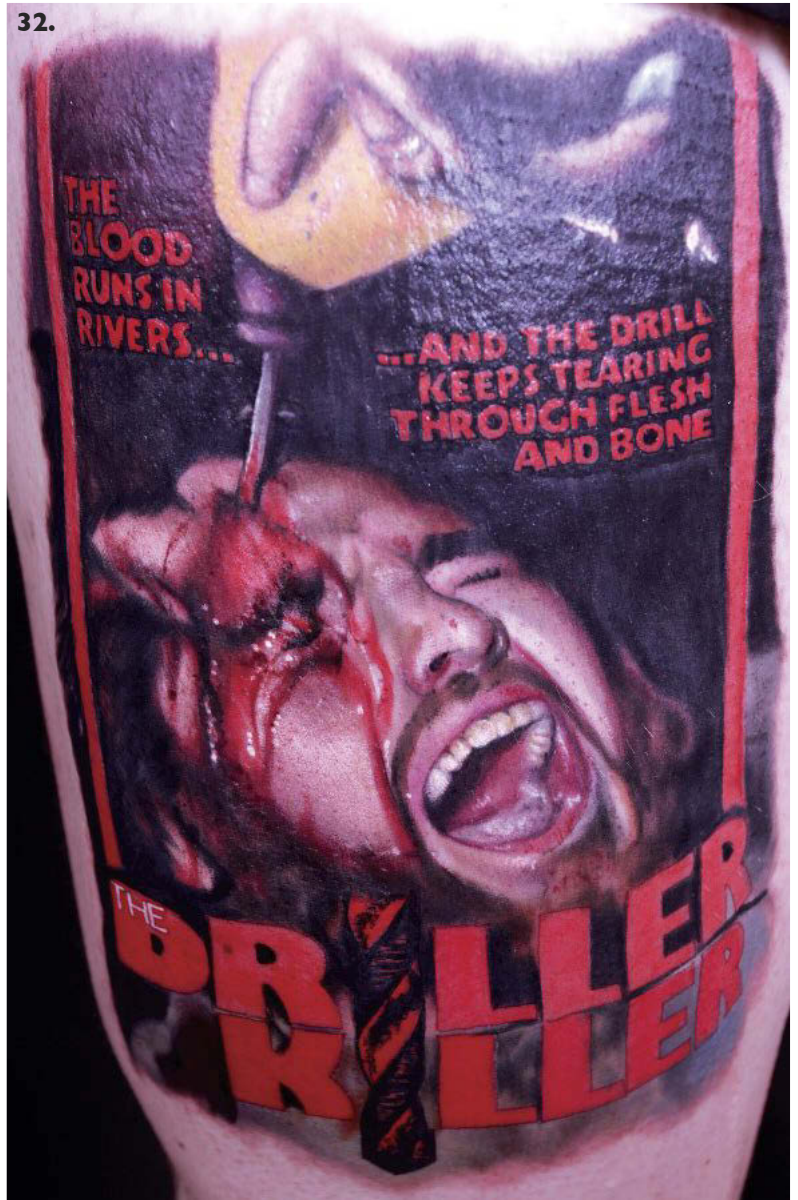
30.



31.



32.



30. by mark shark, alans tattoo
 31. by adem senturk, fat fugu
 32. by alex wright, bridgend
 33. by bex lowe, royal owl
 34. by phat german, no regrets
 35. by dan hancock, this mortal coil
 36. by craig measures, spear tattoo
 37. by mostyn williams, bridgend tattoo studio
 38. mark bester and paul smith
 39. tall boy's flash
 40. by danny taylor, the inkwell
 41. by anne marie carhill
 42. josh bodwell at work
 43. more fuel girls

33.

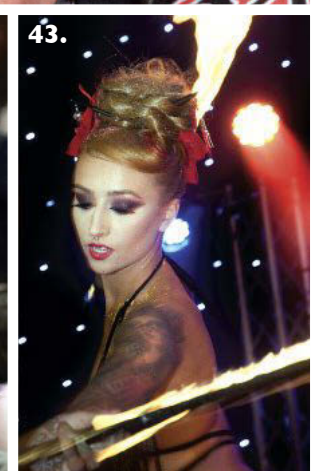
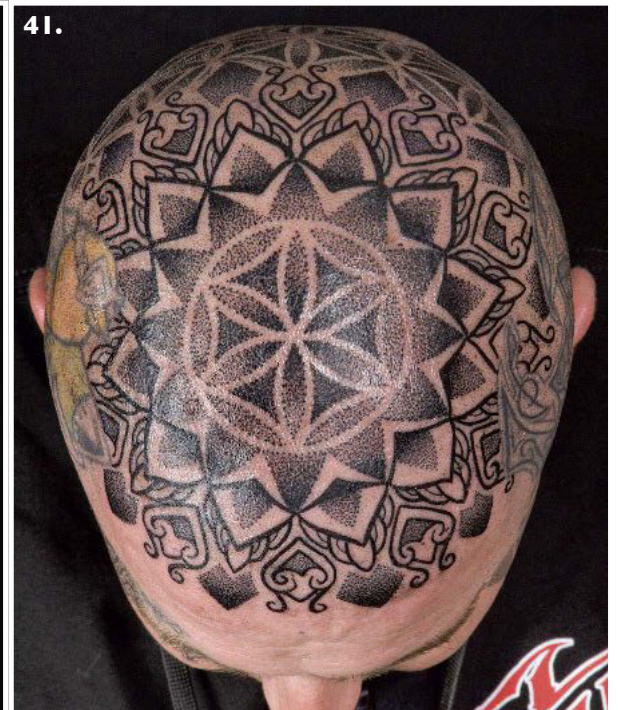


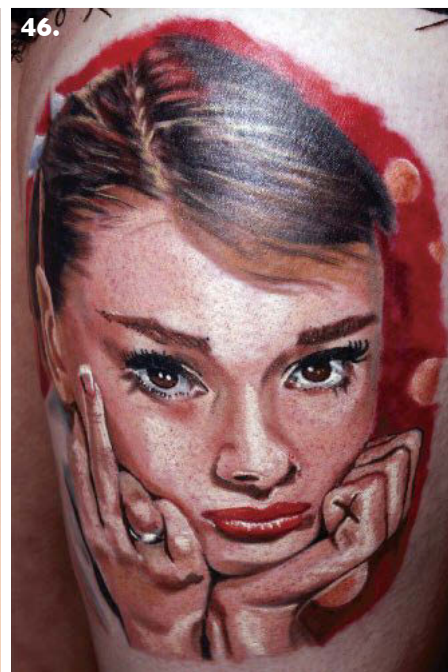
34.



35.







44. by cathy sue, dexterity ink
 45. by chris browning, silver needles
 46. by gavin clarke, obsession tattoo
 47. banana tattoo school
 48. by tall boy
 49. by hollie may,
 old smithy tattoo parlour
 50. by piotre cwiek, southmead tattoo
 51. by adem senturk, fat fugu



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TATTOOS AND HOT RODS

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I just love the summer. Out comes the sun and with it all the tattoos, bikes, cars and lots of smiles. The weather on the Bank Holiday Monday at the end of May was amazing so, with no other convention commitments, I decided to pop along to the Ink & Oil show at the East of England Showground in Peterborough. Now in its second year, this huge car and tattoo event is really beginning to gather pace.

We arrived around noon and the sun was already beating down. As we entered the gates, a large flat area on our left was playing host to a drifting competition, where muscle cars circulate sideways creating clouds of rubber smoke from their skidding tyres. To the right were traditional fairground rides, including a massive sling shot firing a capsule into the sky on long elastic cables.

As you entered the building which housed the indoor events, you were immediately immersed in the tattoo convention. There were about 36 booths set out in six rows, housing a good mix of artists, producing a variety of styles, from your more traditional skulls and pistons, which you might expect at an event like this, to beautiful black and grey realistic portraits from P.J. Reynolds and his local crew from Rising Phoenix, Steve Cutter from Ink Oil and Razorblades and Mark Chadwick from Electra Tattoos. The large hall next to the tattoo show housed very some very expensive and highly tuned Ferraris and Porsches, while outside a large stage was being used as the backdrop to a procession of bouncing hydraulic vehicles.

donatas lasys, inked moose



holly sirenă lee, rising phoenix





artist unknown



artist unknown

Many custom vehicle clubs came along to support the show and there were trucks, vans, hot rods and vintage vehicles pretty much as far the eye could see. My personal favourite was the big old American Cadillacs and chopped hotrods. Ken Fox and his Wall of Death were also on hand to thrill the public with their gravity-defying motorcyclists riding around a vertical drum.

Had I thought about it, I should have brought more money. If retro clothing, metal signs and vintage memorabilia are your thing, then the competition for your cash was hot. Unfortunately it was all at modern day prices, and personally I did find £4 for a portion of chips a little excessive! That said, pre-booked admission tickets for the event were incredibly reasonable, with children under 13 getting in free.

The show closed at 5.30pm which is novel in itself. This meant that everybody had plenty of time to relax and enjoy the evening. I think this combination of 'Ink' and 'Oil' was hugely successful. The time passed so quickly and there was so much to see that we missed much of the show. The whole family are really looking forward to going again next year. Although not solely a tattoo show, I think most tattoo fans I know would have a great time and I would highly recommend it.



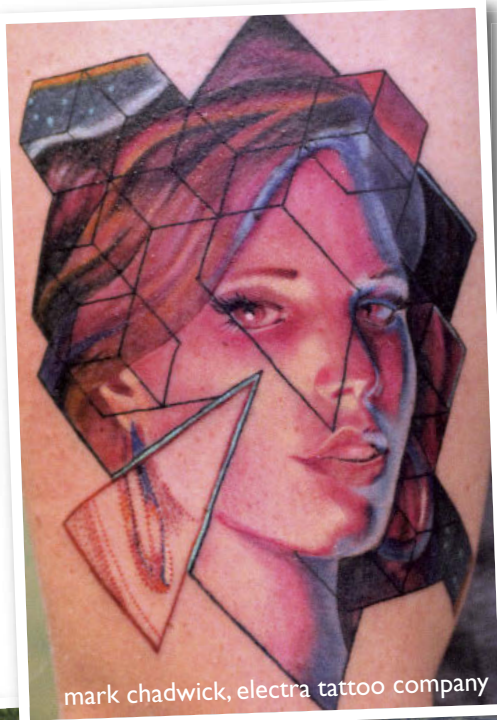
the dukes



tootall paul



jurgis mikalauskas, hypnosis tattoo



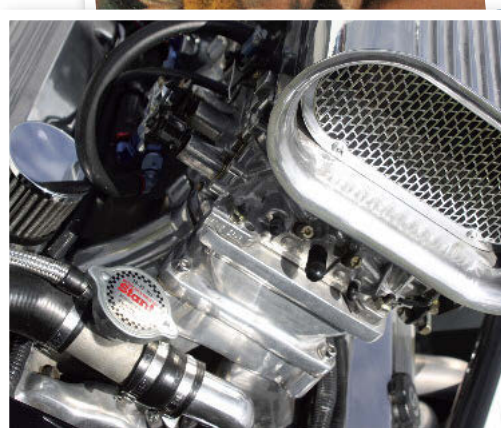
mark chadwick, electra tattoo company



donatas lasys, inked moose



tony evans, opulent ink



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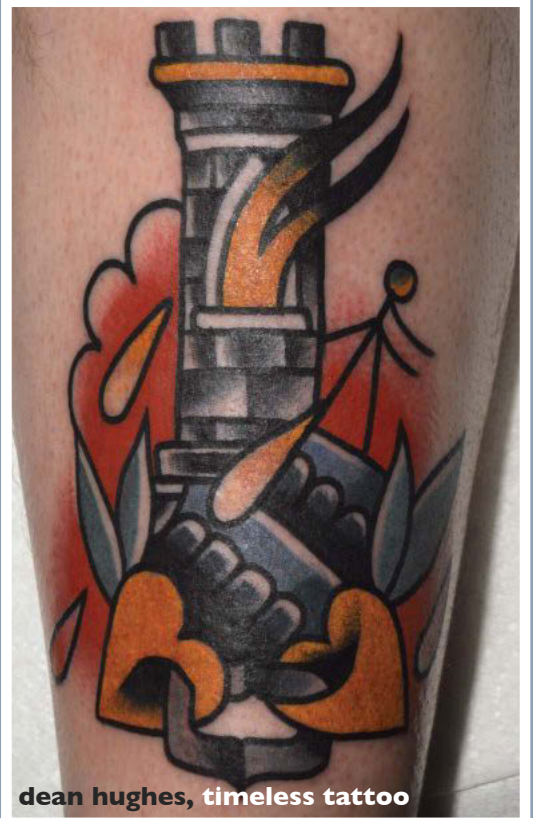


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steve, memories and mischief (germany)



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painted lady tattoo parlour



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india street tattoo



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turk, left hand black (usa)



nick mayes, north sea tattoo company

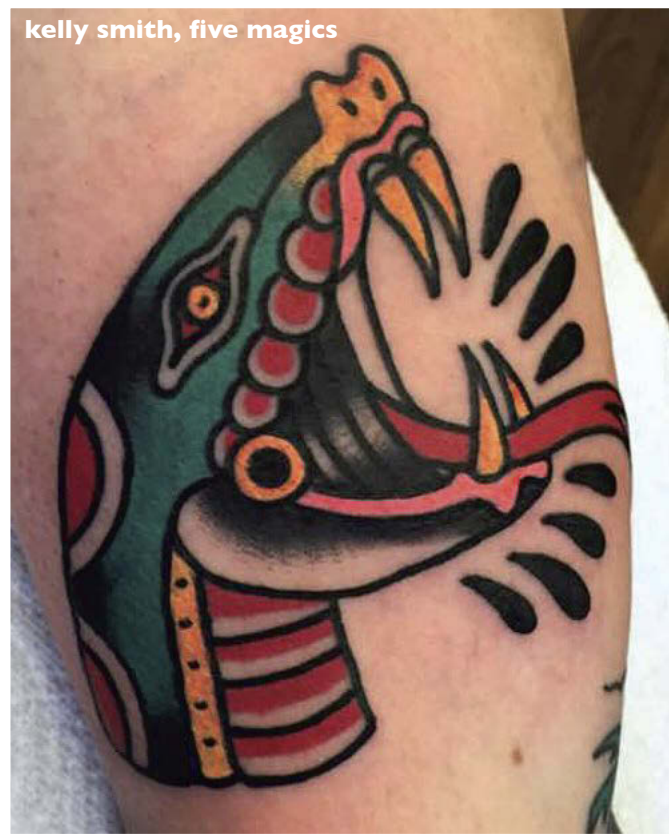
alex rattray, red hot and blue



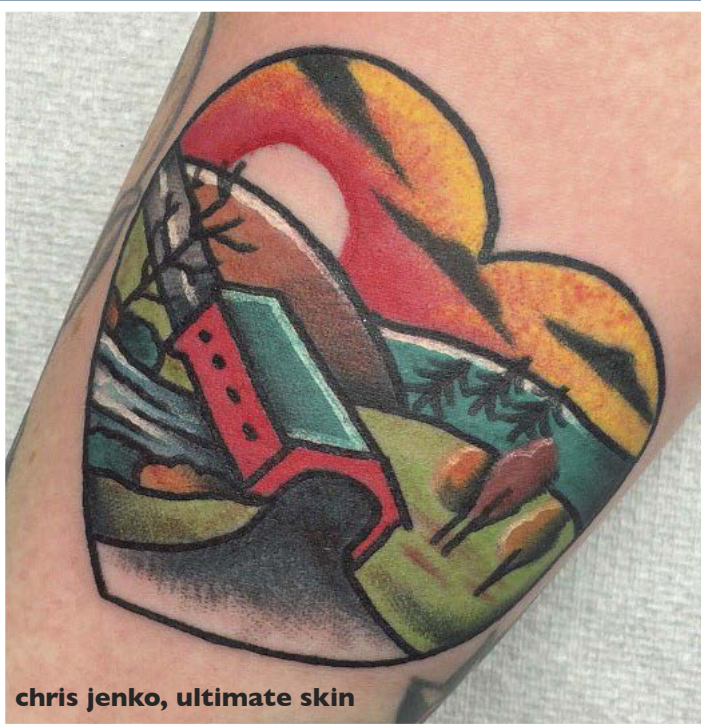
gege, boris tattoo (austria)



kelly smith, five magics



chris jenko, ultimate skin



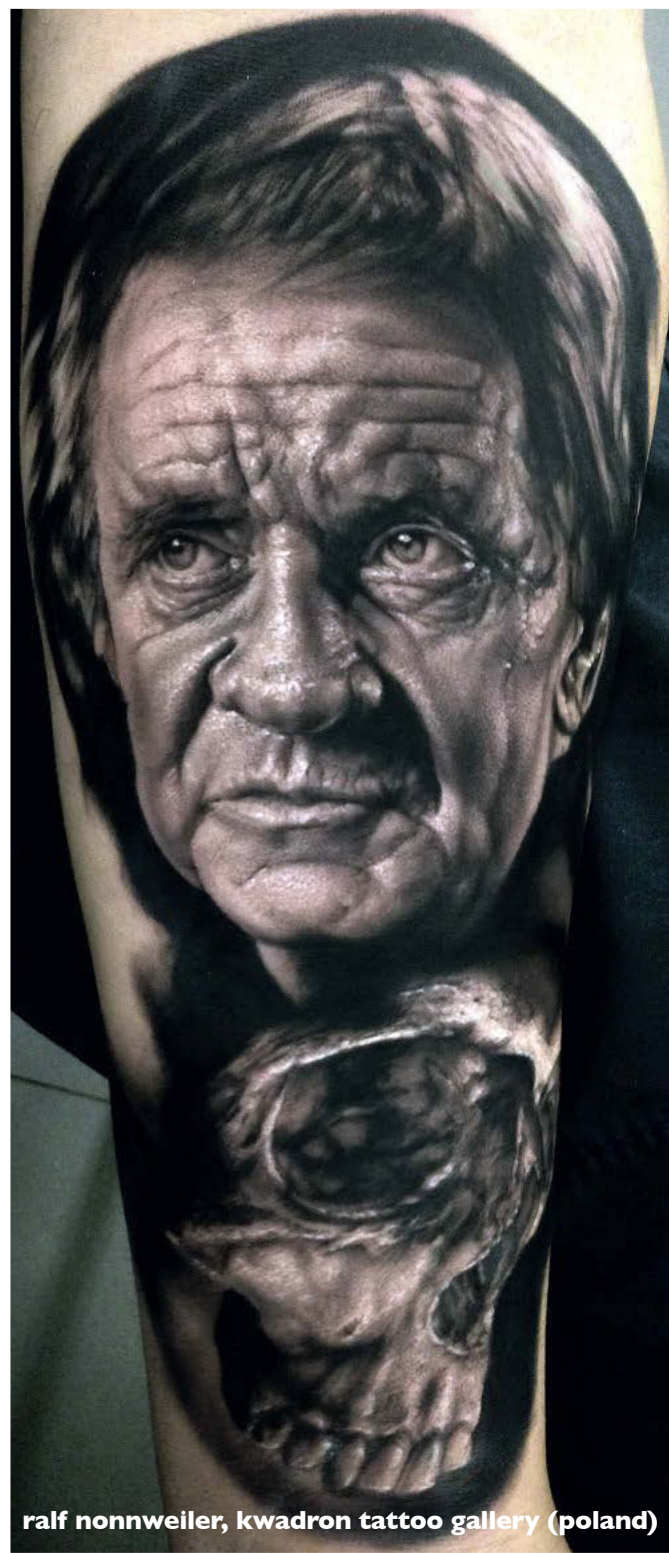
alex, adorned tattoo



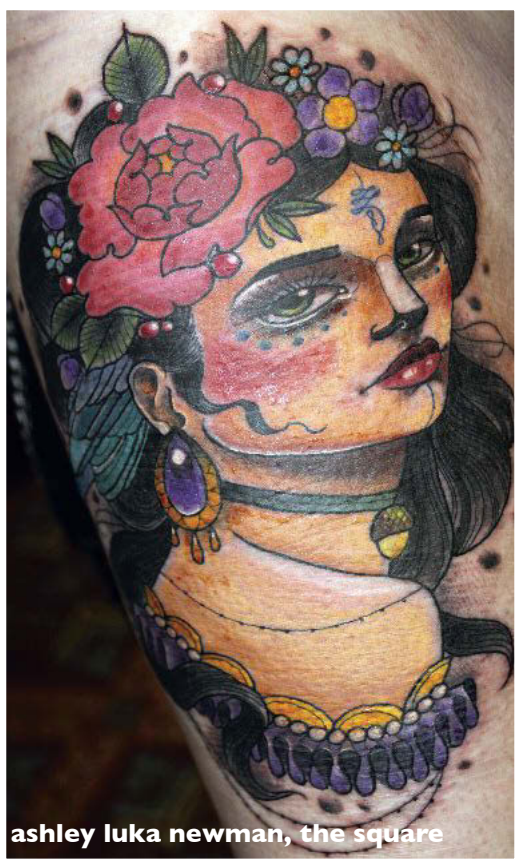
jankowski, custom tattoos



**dave bryant,
lifetime tattoo**



ralf nonnweiler, kwadron tattoo gallery (poland)

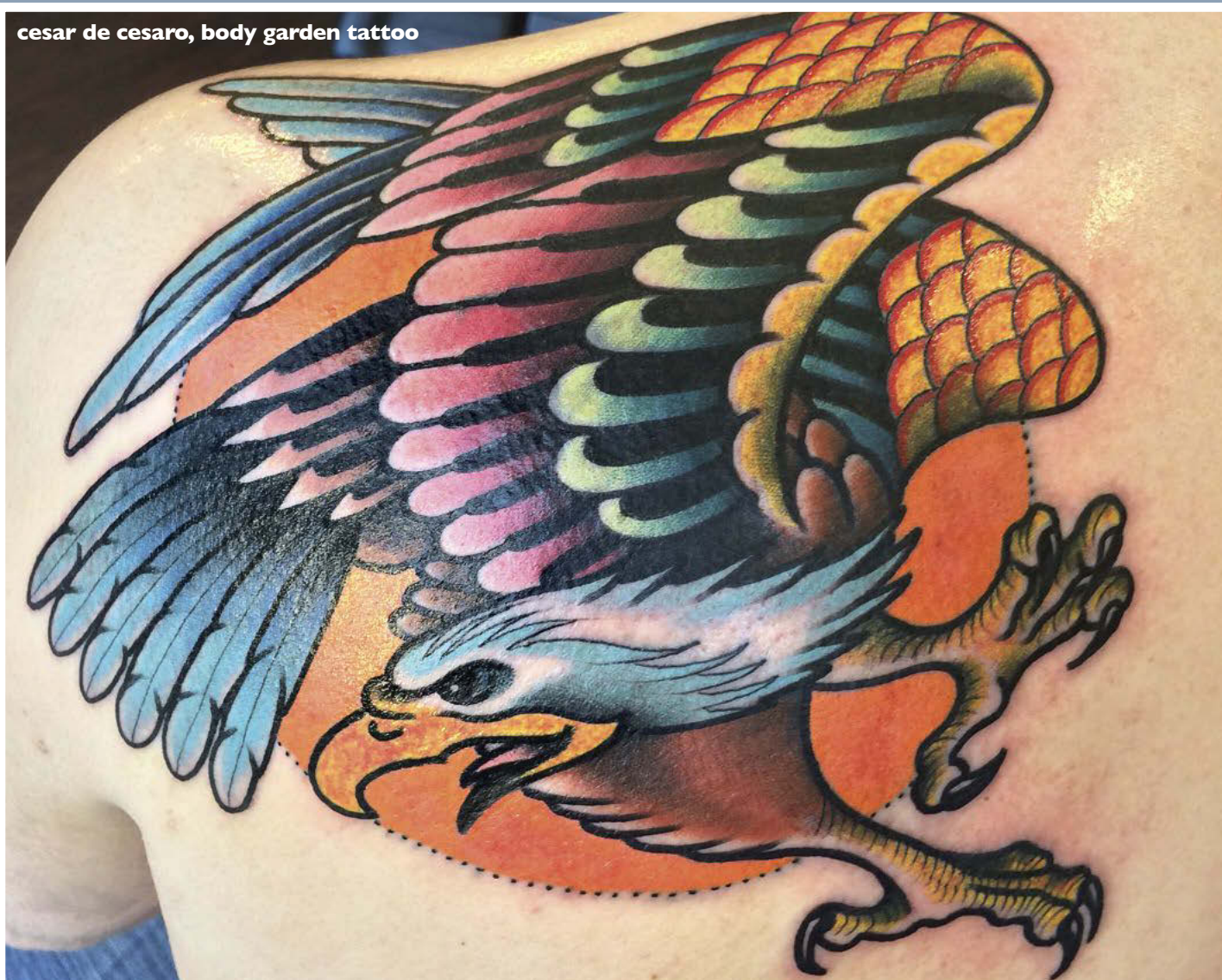


ashley luka newman, the square



chris sean perkins,
lovingink tattoo

cesar de cesaro, body garden tattoo



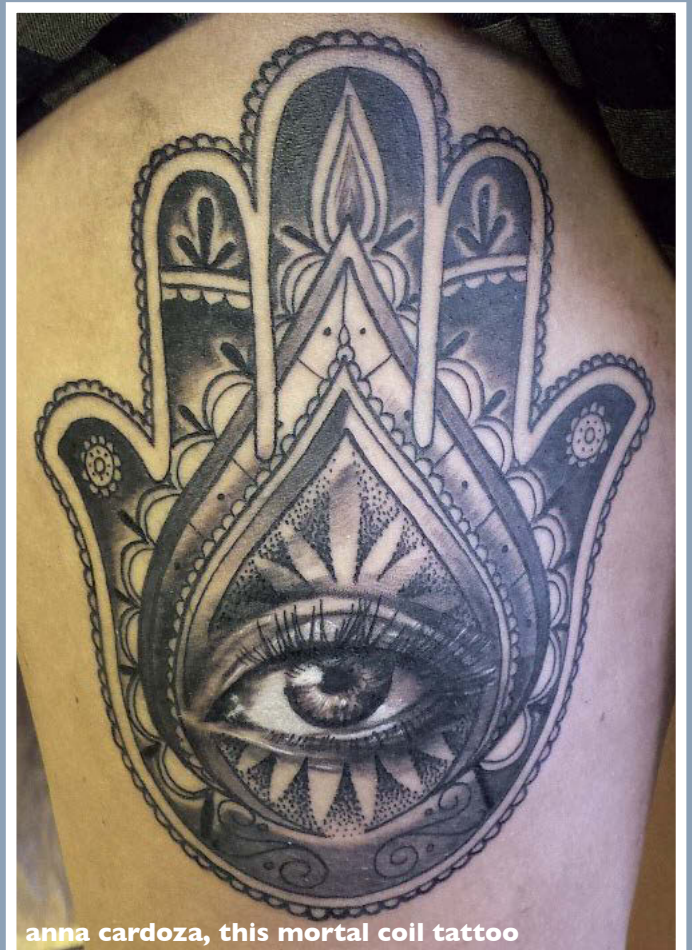
terry frank, electric punch tattoo



graydon abbott, black letter tattoo company



sile sanda (on the road)



anna cardoza, this mortal coil tattoo

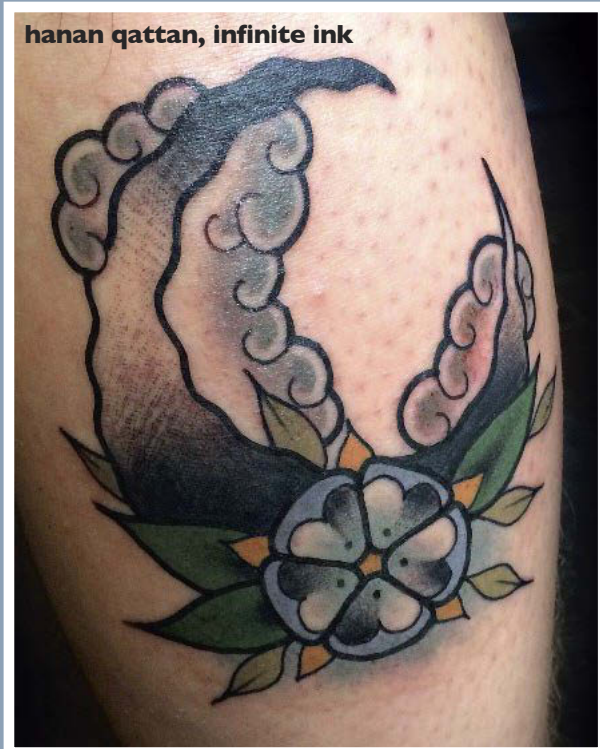
fabrice koch fab, inkognito (germany)



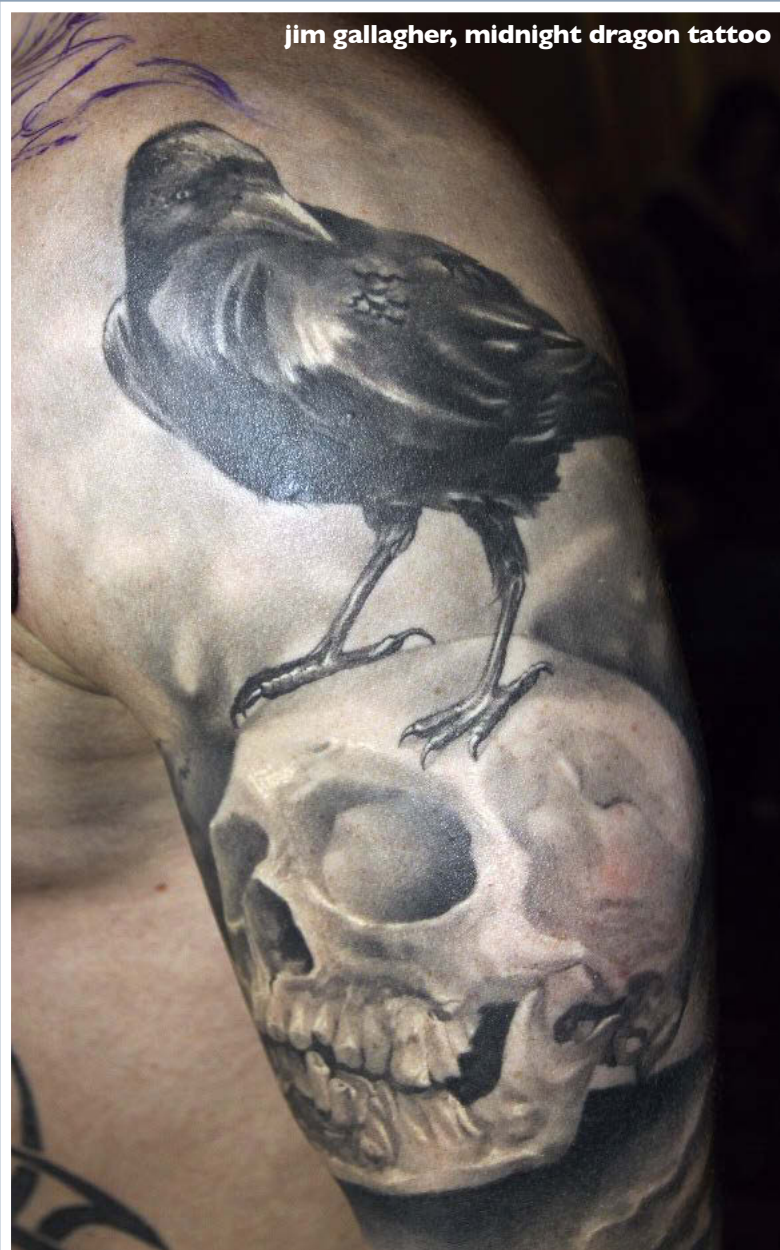
**tem sosa,
hope and glory**



hanan qattan, infinite ink



jim gallagher, midnight dragon tattoo



**adrian finsterkram,
three nails tattoo (australia)**





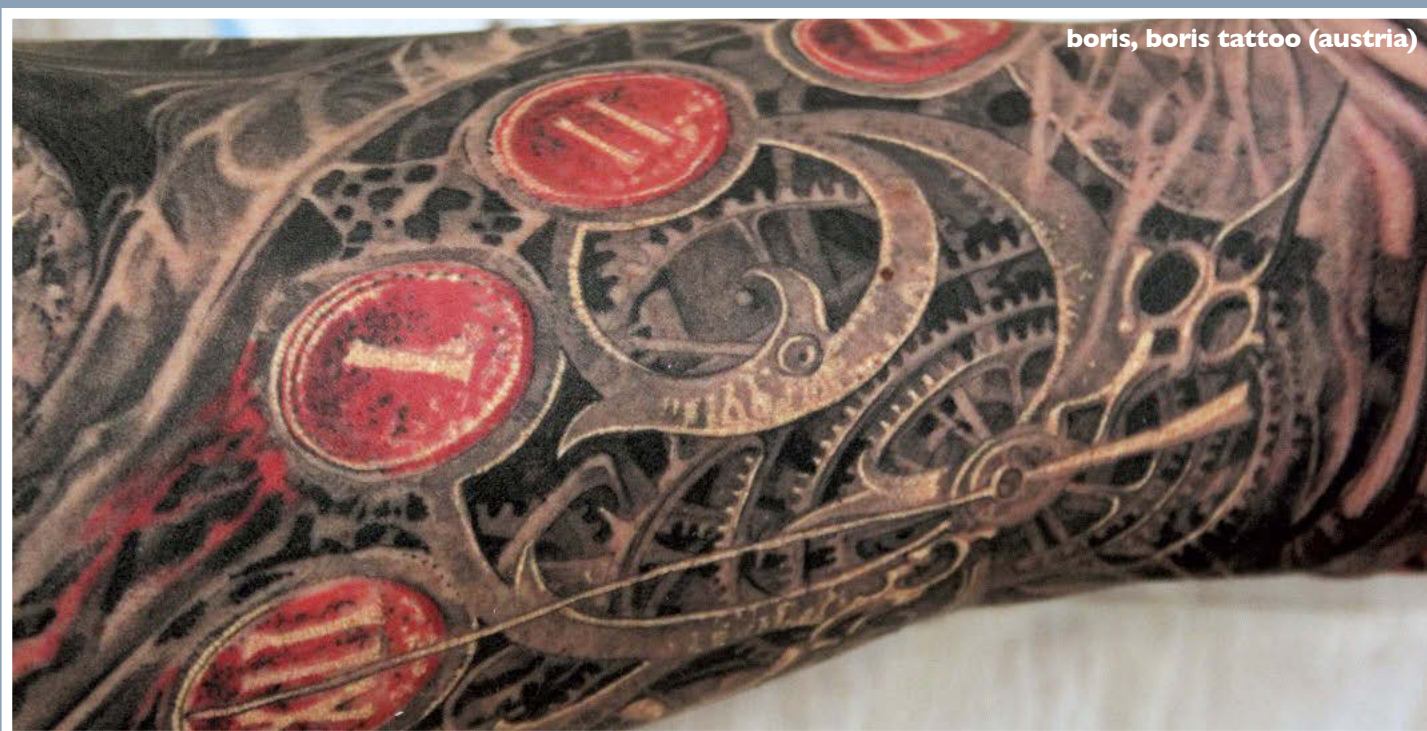
santa perpetua, black sails tattoo



noka, dimitri hk (france)

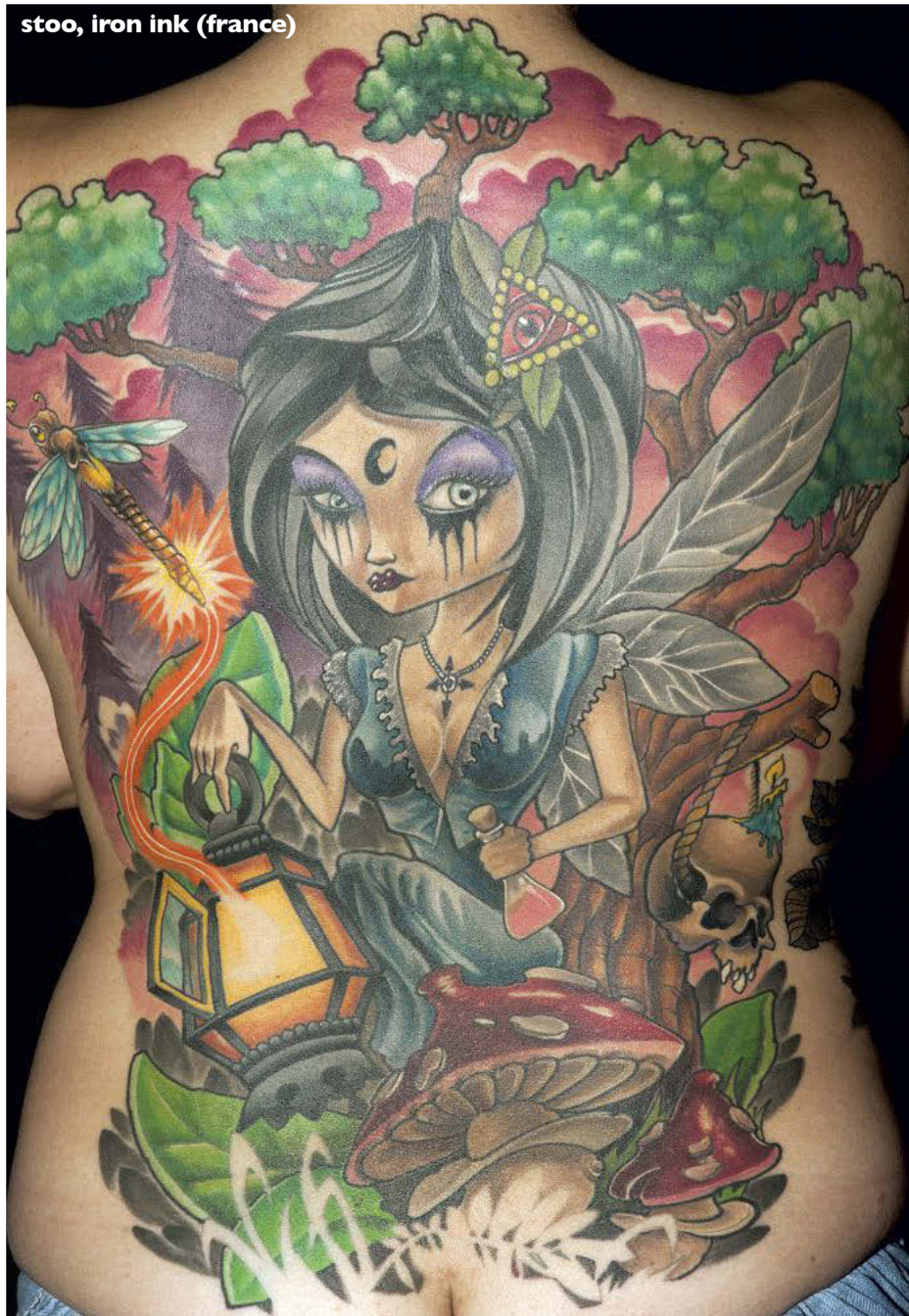


boris, boris tattoo (austria)



boris, boris tattoo (austria)

stoo, iron ink (france)



simon cooke, the ink spot



scott move, parliament tattoo



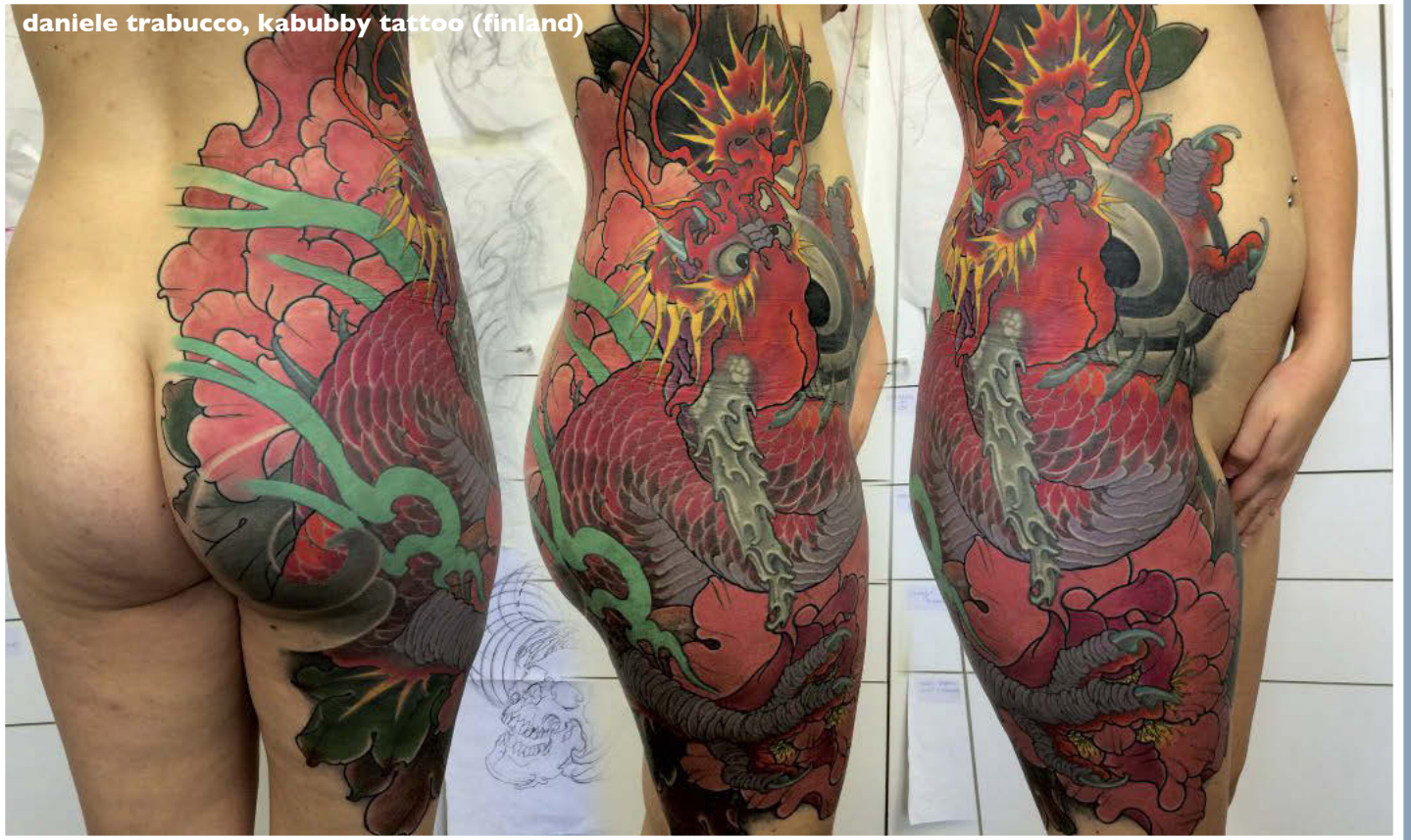
richard barclay,
michael rose visual art



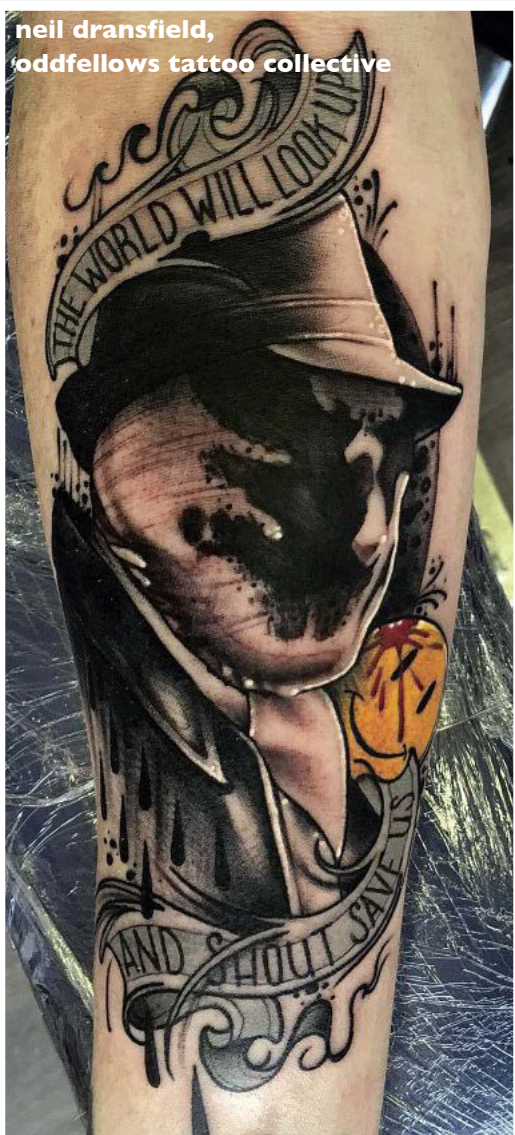
josh peacock, legacy ink



daniele trabucco, kabubby tattoo (finland)



neil dransfield,
oddfellows tattoo collective



dennis grrr, deviant art (france)



fabrice koch, fabinkognito (germany)

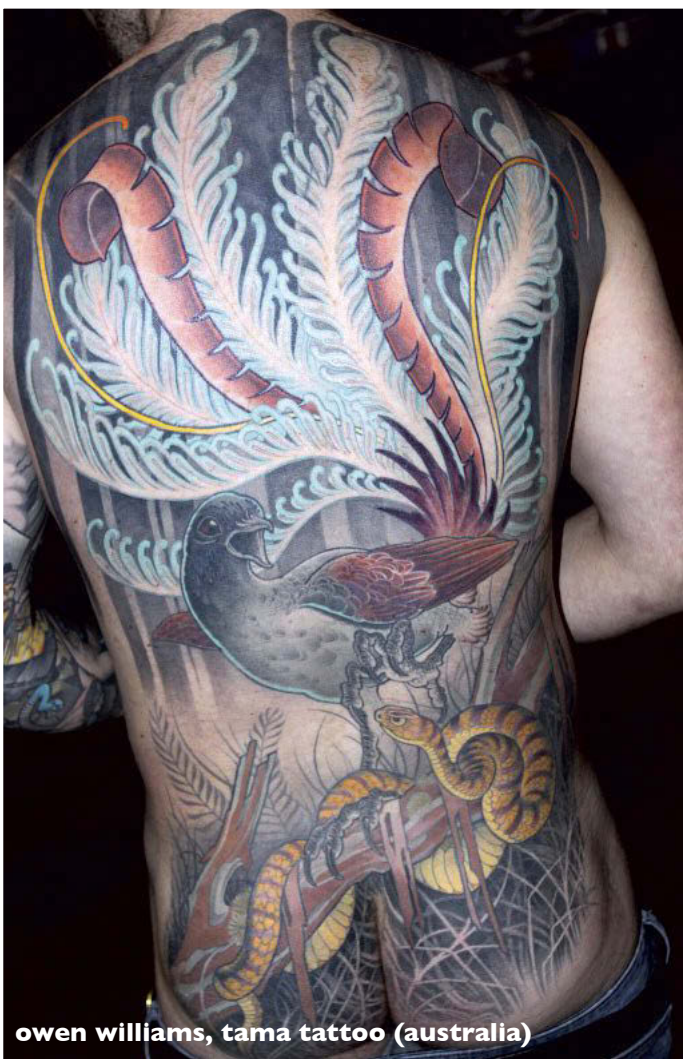


arron burton, cosmic tattoo

brady payton, catalyst arts collective (usa)



sam reilly, the inkwell tattoo studio



owen williams, tama tattoo (australia)



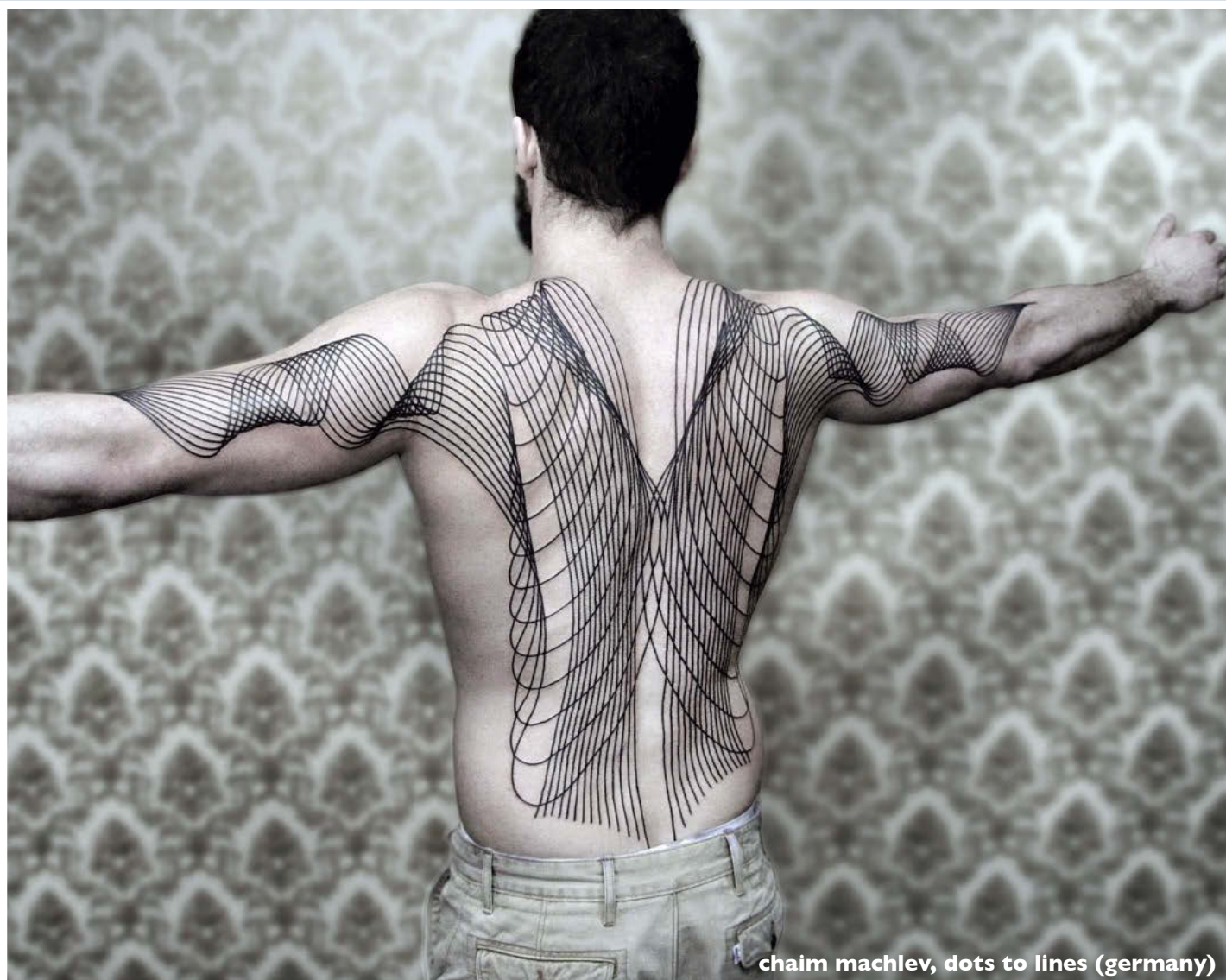
benjamin dawson, tanuki tattoo



pauly fistfight, true love tattoos



adam, folklore tattoo



chaim machlev, dots to lines (germany)

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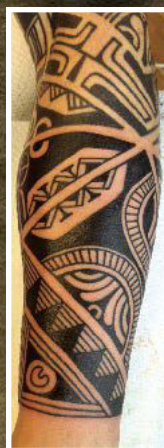
words by Emma Whittaker
pics by Nicky Bryant and Chris Higgins

So there we were, Team Total Tattoo arguing about who should interview this tattooist who creates amazing black work: Polynesian, Maori, Samoan, Marquesan and other tribal styles. Such beautiful tattoos from exotic places. With our thoughts wandering to far-off beaches, palm trees, longhouses and tattoos rich in history, we drew straws and I won. But instead of a trip to the Pacific Islands, it was off to 'Eastborneo' for me!

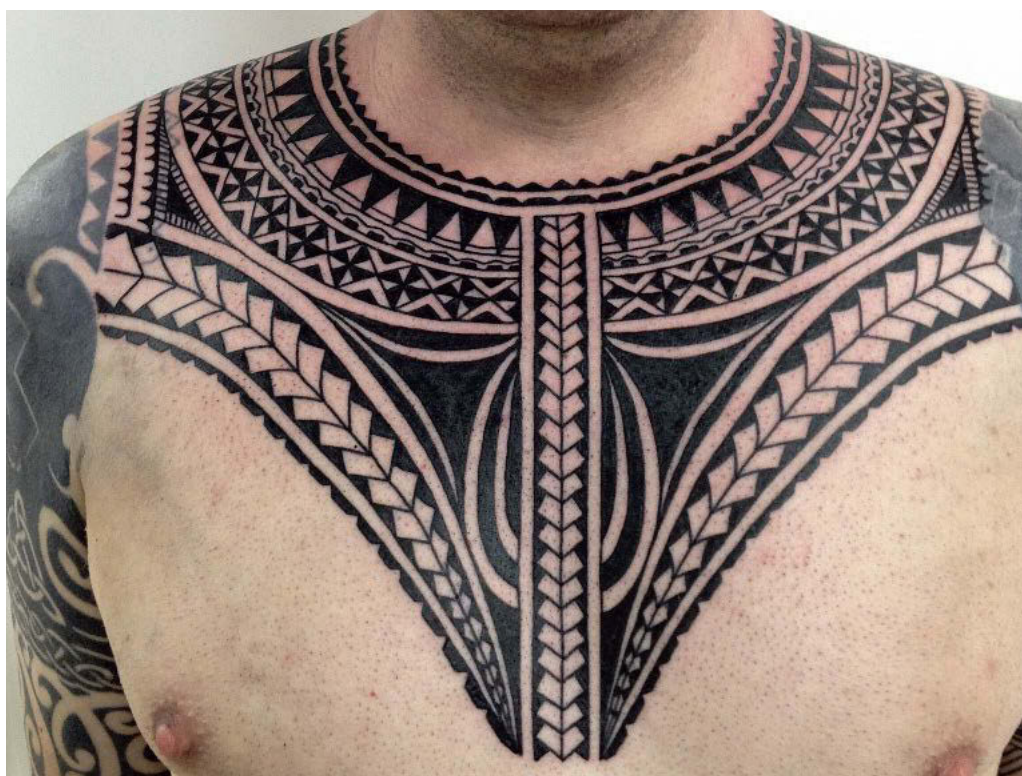
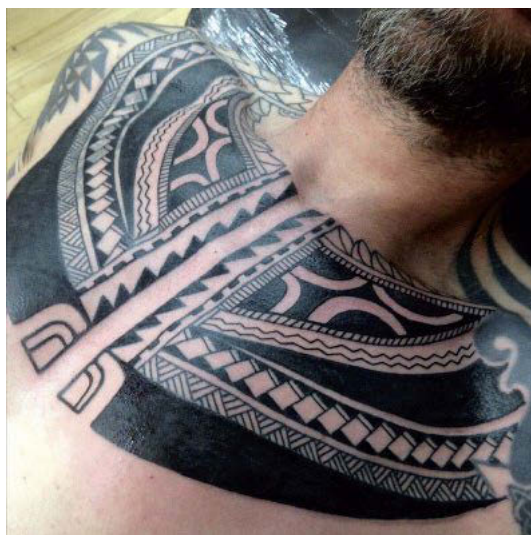
Chris Higgins is a tattooist's tattooist. You only have to see the studios where he has worked, who he has worked with, and the names who supported his mammoth Nepal Earthquake Fundraiser in May to realise that he is a very popular and well-liked man.

He had no formal art training but he was brought up surrounded by art, with parents interested in everything from comic books and pop art to architecture. Chris tells me he "did art at school" and regrets not pursuing it at a higher level, but times have changed since this Croydon boy was at school. He always sketched and drew whenever he could and one of his main creative outlets has always been music.

During the years he spent working in a bank in Croydon, South London, Chris spent many a lunchtime in tattoo shops, looking at flash. He even ventured to get a couple of pieces. However it wasn't until he saw an early copy of International Tattoo Art magazine containing the work of Curly Moore and Alex Binnie that he finally thought "That's for me. That's the kind of tattooing I want."



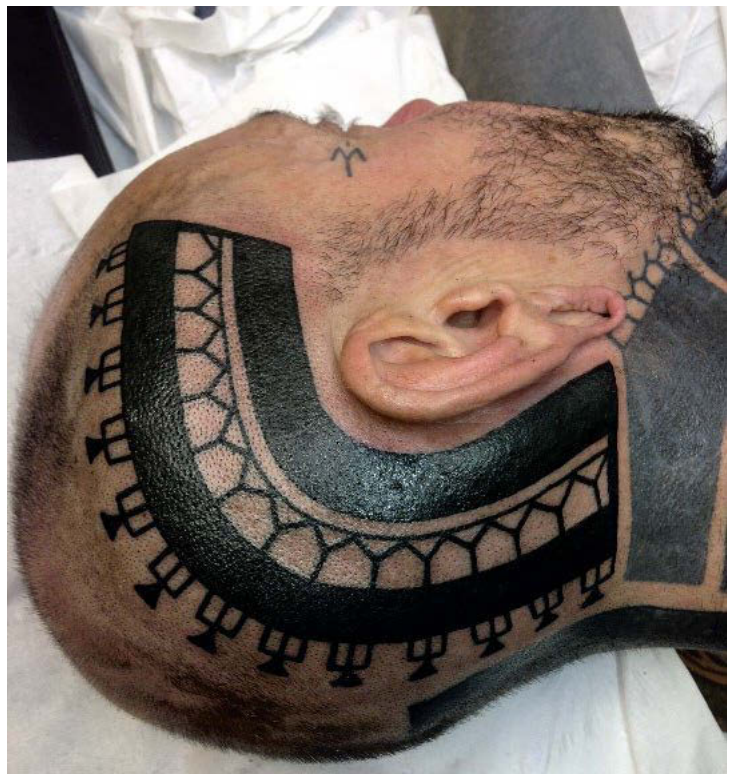
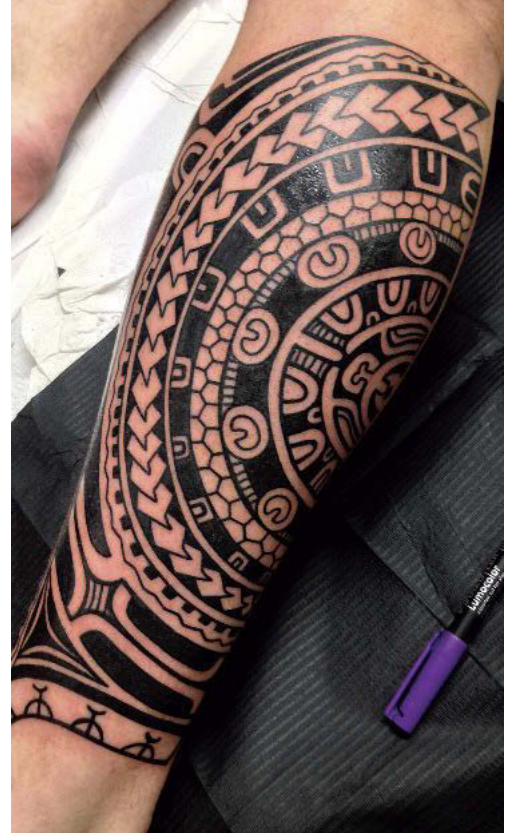
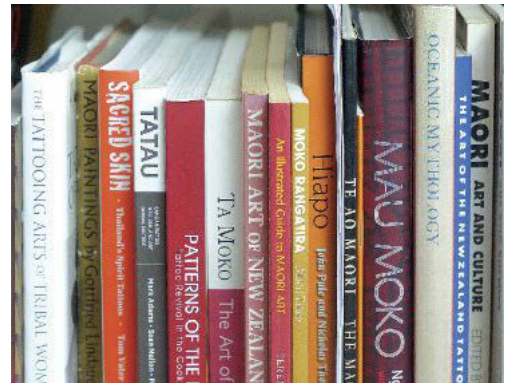
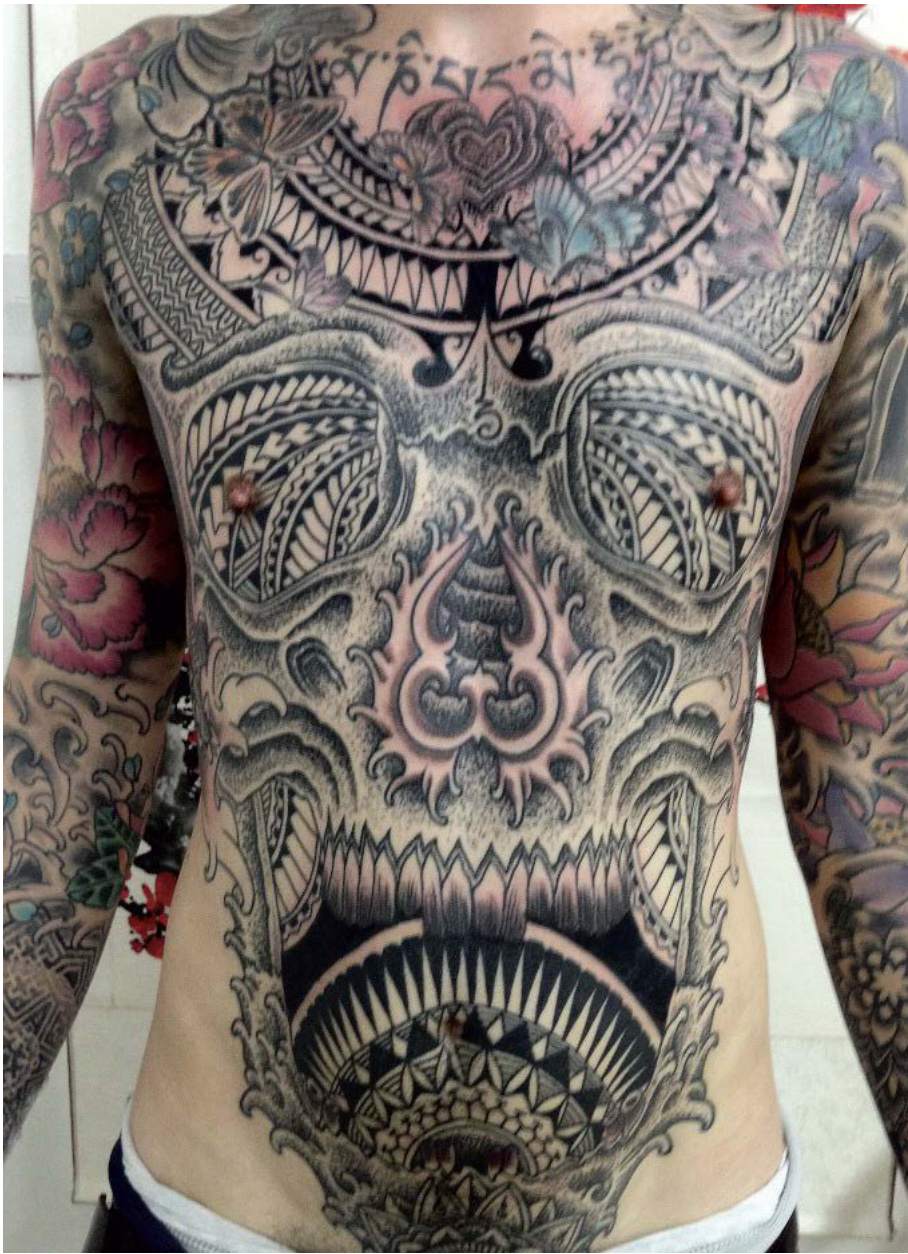


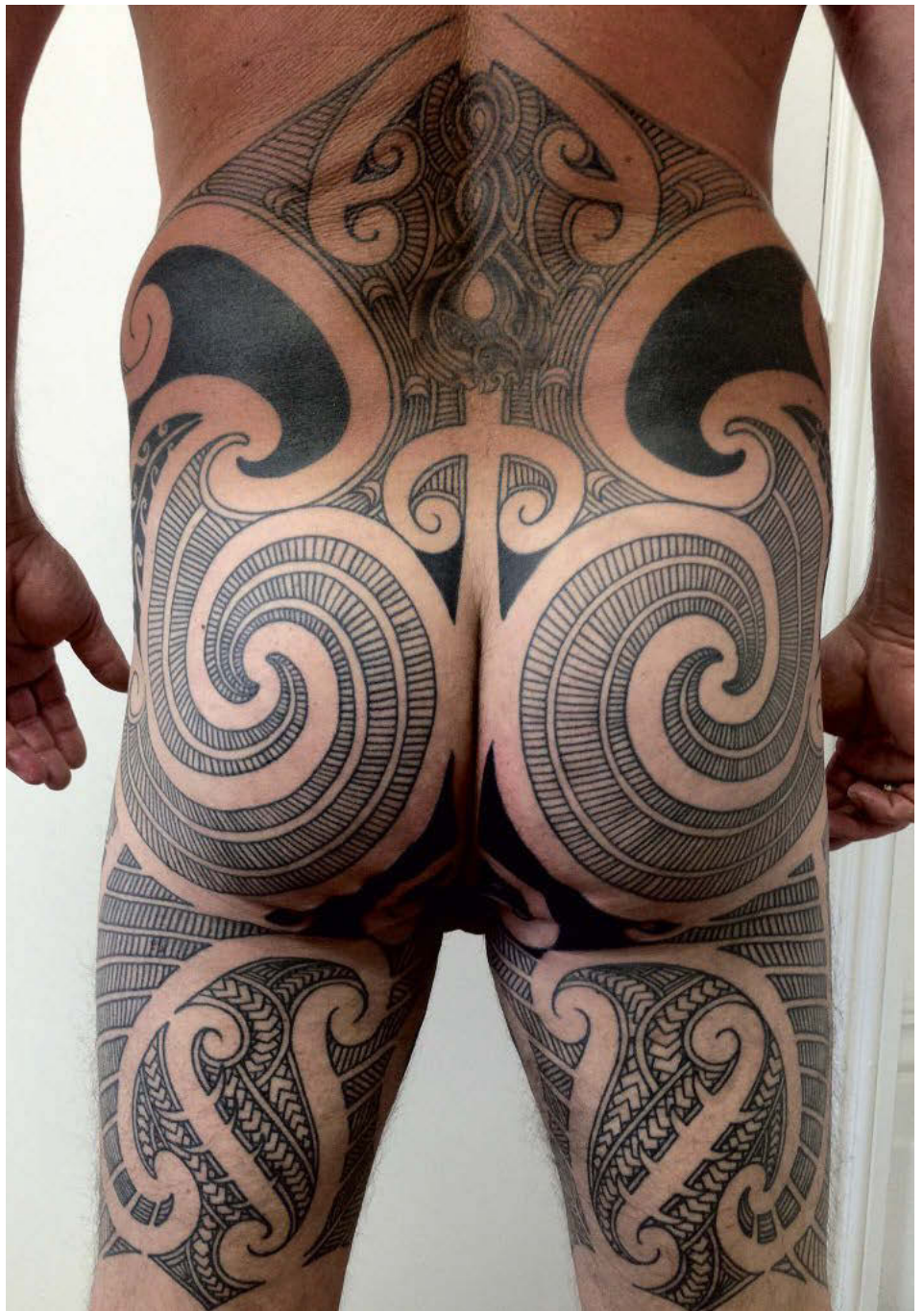
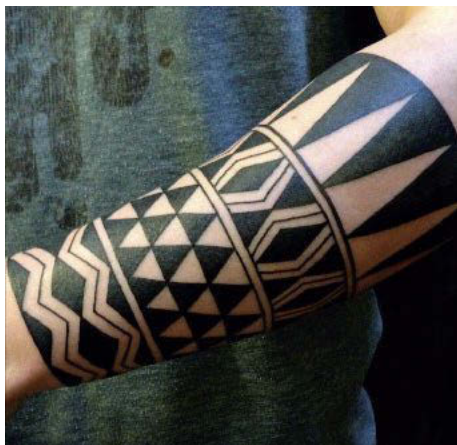


So Chris started his tattoo journey, as a collector at first, getting tattooed by Steve Collett in Croydon, by Matt Cunningham who was working at Bug's tattoo shop in Camden and then booking in with Curly at Into You. He got his Marquesan sleeves, ribs and head tattooed by Curly. Each time he was there, he would ask questions. Indeed, it took a lot of Chris's skin to learn what he could about being the other side of the needle. "In a reverse kind of way I got my autoclave, ultrasound and sterilisation knowledge all sorted before I went to Micky Sharpz to get my first machines. I got some pre-made needles too – which weren't as easy to get hold of then – and off I went."

"I always tattooed as much black work as I could but I worked in a street shop so had to tattoo anything that came through the door: lower back tribal, Chinese characters, Jenny Clarke designs, lettering and Leo Zulueta flash, which was always great to tattoo. It all gave me the experience I needed. If anyone came in for some black work, whether that be neo-tribal, Polynesian or Celtic, I'd try and do a custom piece rather than copy the flash."

Chris was obviously making his mark and his black work came to dominate his tattooing. And ever since, he has been quietly beavering away, working and doing guest spots in some of the best tattoo shops in the UK and Europe, creating stunning, clean and authentic work. "I knew early on that this was the style I wanted to work with. I obsessed about it; it gives you nowhere to hide; lines have to be spot on, clean and sharp. The work I do now is virtually 100% black. I have a few Japanese sleeves on the go, which I love to do, but really I made a conscious effort years ago to focus purely on the work which really resonates with me: bold, clean, graphic black work."





This style of tattooing comes with a history and rules that must be respected. "The mythology, stories and placement are much more important to those that are indigenous. In the Cook Islands and other islands in the Pacific, missionaries basically made tattooing, or tatau as it is known there, a heathen practice, so that it is amazing that it has survived. I have some clients from the Islands. We work together to make their work accurate and authentic and I am always respectful of traditional patterns and placement."



Curly and Alex Binnie are the obvious early influences and catalysts for getting Chris into tattooing. Chris echoes many others by saying that both these artists have inspired a generation of tattooists and have helped to propel the industry to where it is now. In fact many members of the Into You 'family' have had a direct or indirect influence on Chris's work, including his great friend Nikole Lowe, formerly of Into You and now owner of Good Times Tattoo in London. Chris credits Nikole (although she may not realise it) with inspiring him to open his own shop and it's at Good Times where he can still be found on Wednesdays, still tattooing on his 'day off', just not being 'the boss'.

In his beautiful Eastbourne shop, Chris is lucky enough to have several young artists working with him on a daily basis. "We can now offer a range of styles other than my black work. Harriet Heath was working in Eastbourne already. Her style is so strong and bold, especially for a female artist, and I really like her nice black lines. Then we have Elliot Josef Guy who does more figurative stuff, and Valeria Marinaci who is really coming on with her own style, which is very gentle, with some lovely dot work. And then Ben Davies, who does good, solid and largely traditional work with loads of colour, which is obviously not what I do!"

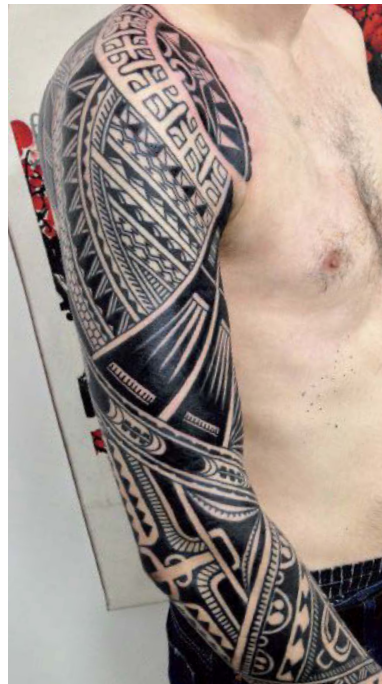
Higgins & Co plays host to regular guest artists too, such as Croc Tatau – who has recently had a major influence on the layout and flow of Chris's own Polynesian work. "Getting tattooed by hand by Croc made it all come together," he says.





"As well as our local clients, lots of people travel to get tattooed here. Social media – instagram, Facebook, WordPress and so on – have made it all so much easier now. Your audience is wider and you're not just reliant on people walking in and looking at your book."

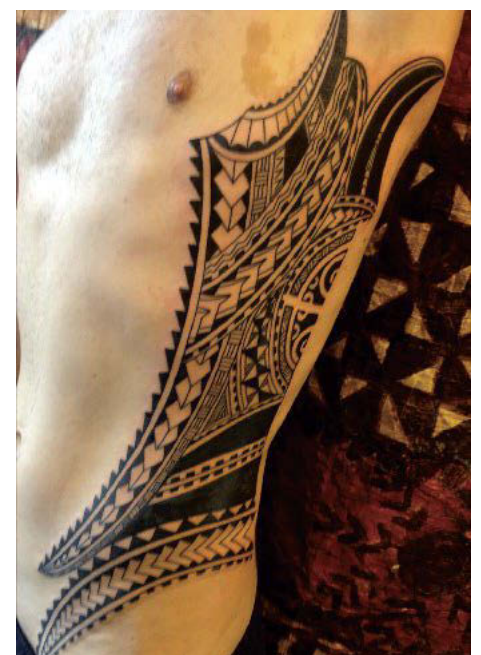
Chris has now been tattooing for seventeen years, and I was very curious to know why he waited so long before opening his own shop. "My shop sort of found me. I wasn't really looking because I was happy at Into You. But with its space and light, this studio is a great place to work. I enjoy coming here. It's not too far from home, and it's close to the beach so my dogs love it! I hope that those working with me keep enjoying it too. It's great that we are all still watching, learning, and getting inspired by each other. The shop is my baby, so I never really switch off. I keep drawing and looking for inspiration, and I can see my peers pushing themselves too. There is healthy competition in this area now, and several really good tattooists can be found locally. I have been resistant to change, but I believe whatever makes your work better is a good thing."



The roll call of people Chris wanted to thank was so long I really couldn't put them all here, but such a huge list of artists, tattooists, shop managers and family is testament to how Chris fits within the industry. He is a genuinely lovely guy, very humble, and very generous with his time and knowledge. He is also incredibly grateful for what he has learnt and what he continues to learn.

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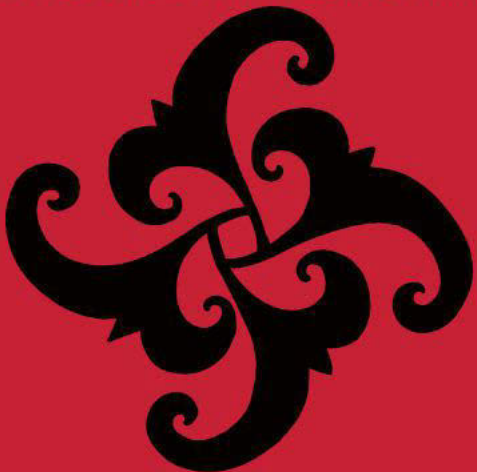
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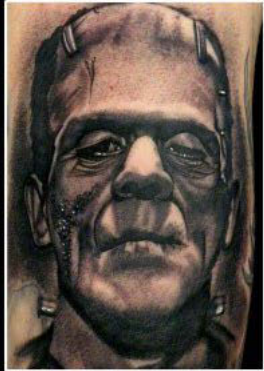
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1. by johanna, bluebird tattoo (sweden)
2. by pero, lucky 7 (norway)
3. julian, corpsepainter
4. by julian, corpsepainter (germany)
5. stylish traders
6. by gunnar v, element tattoo (norway)
7. art macarbe
8. by simon, los hermanos (denmark)
9. the elephants supporting the old carlsberg brewery entrance
10. the old carlsburg brewery



COPENHAGEN TATTOO CONVENTION

Last year, Denmark inexplicably had to go without any large conventions, which was a shame for somewhere with such a notable place in the history of modern tattooing. Not only does the country have many amazing artists, but its capital Copenhagen is home to Europe's oldest tattoo shop.

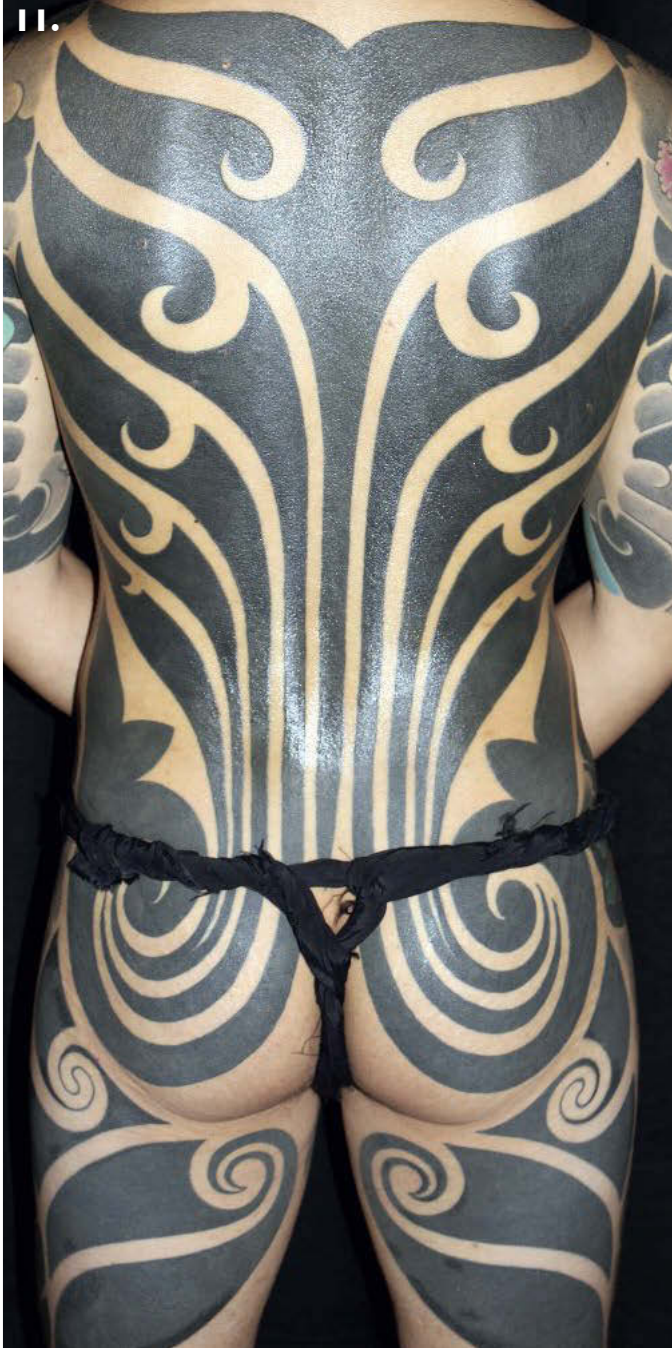
In 2015, Alex from Rites of Passage Tattoo decided that Copenhagen needed a convention comeback of epic proportions so he re-launched the Copenhagen International Tattoo Convention. More than three hundred tattooists were there, making its venue – the historic Carlsberg Brewery – the place to be in May.

One thing we know about Alex from Rites of Passage is that understatement is not exactly his thing. A Scot who made Denmark his home two decades ago, Alex is the sort of man for whom only superlatives will do. This means if he's putting on a convention, you can guarantee it won't just be a humble meeting of a few like-minded souls in a club. Three hundred artists, assembled in one of the most spectacular venues in the country will do nicely, thank you very much. And not just any old tattooists, of course; they must be hand-picked from the world's elite.

Every tattooist invited to Copenhagen was chosen for his or her artistic credentials, which made a leisurely walk along the seemingly endless aisles a pure pleasure for the connoisseur. Several thousand visitors

came during the weekend, but the hall never seemed crowded. The sheer size of the place sometimes made for a lack of festive atmosphere. The organisers didn't complain about not having enough visitors, but some tattooists and traders said that they would have liked more cash flow power from the visitors. It seems that the novelty of having a tattoo convention in town is no longer enough to bring in the masses and part them from their hard-earned money, even in relatively affluent Scandinavia. It would be interesting to know if traders saw a surge in post-convention orders from their online stores.

It does seem that quite a few conventions are experiencing this, with direct consumption diminishing and dedicated tattoo fans coming to do their research in order to make a more informed decision later on, whether that's getting a tattoo or buying something from a trader. This could be an opportunity for tattoo artists, and the industry that they support and are supported by, to showcase their products and artwork in a different way. Some artists did this in Copenhagen, by bringing along clients as models for some





very ambitious projects. This meant that some outstanding tattoos were done specifically for the contests at the convention – a smart way to show off one's talents to a highly qualified jury and an expert audience.

One artist who got some much-deserved international recognition was Julian of Corpsepainter Tattoo in Munich, who received the Best of Day on Friday with an extremely life-like colour portrait. Another

worthy winner was Johanna Thor of Bluebird Tattoo in Sweden. Her jaw-droppingly beautiful tiger backpiece on one of her regular customers deservedly won the Best Large trophy and was one of the most admired pieces of the weekend.

I observed another interesting phenomenon in Copenhagen: just a couple of years ago, at any Scandinavian convention, a tattooist specialising in Western Old School or Japanese merely had to put a few

11 & 12. by david sena, senaspace (usa)
 13. by ulysses blair, apokalypse (germany)
 14. by jacob pedersen, crooked moon
 15. by benjamin moss, apokalypse (germany)
 16. by dero, rock 'n' roll (poland)
 17. by david sena, senaspace (usa)
 18. by mads, hakuna ma tattoo (germany)
 19. by johan, crooked moon (sweden)
 20. by mads, hakuna ma tattoo (germany)
 21. by bob tyrrell, night gallery (usa)
 22. by big sleeps (usa)

23.



24.



- 23. by david sena, senaspace (usa)
- 24. by morten, sjohus tattoo (denmark)
- 25. by gunnar v, element tattoo (norway)
- 26. by jens bergström, heavenly ink (sweden)
- 27. by sonny, tattoo world (denmark)
- 28. by johanna, bluebird (sweden)
- 29. by tofi torfinski, ink-ognito (poland)

25.



26.



'wanna-do' designs on the table and they would quickly be booked up for all three days of the event. This seems to have changed. The 2015 audience was extremely critical and often asked about getting a design individually created, with many wanting watercolour or dotwork styles. This might be a sign that the Danish scene has caught up with the rest of the world and is becoming more trend-orientated than before. Like it or not, the tattoo world has its fashions and fads, and it sometimes changes more quickly than an artist is able, or willing, to modify their work.

Whatever the style, creativity and skill will always prevail, of course, and this was

borne out by the winner of the coveted trophy for the Best in Show: Ulyss Blair for a wonderful cross-style piece, a nicely balanced mix of old school, watercolour and colour realism. This American artist is now working alongside his friend Jack Matisse at Apocalypse Tattoo, the lair that Benjamin Moss created for himself and his colleagues in Berlin's trendy Friedrichshain district.

In the same way that creative tattoos will always find an audience, a skilfully curated show will always be successful. It certainly looks like the Copenhagen International Tattoo Convention has claimed back its well-deserved place on the convention circuit.

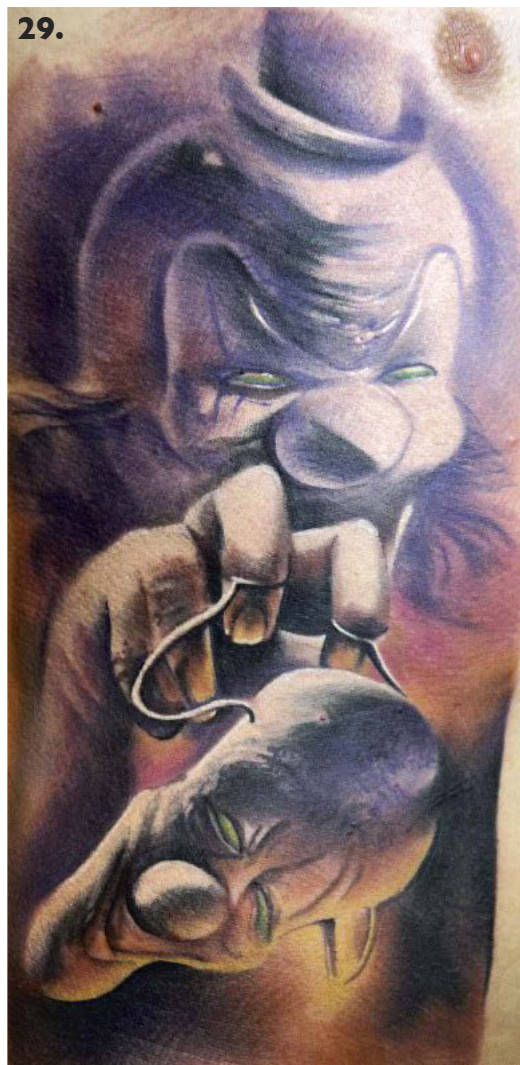
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Tattoo Masters Flash Collection

The Tattoo Masters Flash Collection comes in two incredible volumes and pays tribute to the somewhat unsung hero of tattoo... the sheet of flash. In the mid-noughties, these humble pieces of paper were in danger of becoming obsolete; the realm of the historian or the old school street shop, they were perhaps seen as just not 'custom' enough. Tattoo book publisher extraordinaire, Edition Reuss, has put out these volumes to begin redressing the balance and celebrate the rich vein of creativity that can be found on sheets of flash.





In the past, flash was not just about making money from the wall; it could also be an open line of communication between tattooists at a time when information was limited and somewhat protected.

Part 1 of the Tattoo Masters Flash Collection opens with a fascinating foreword from the legendary Ed Hardy, showcasing rare flash from his personal archive. These sheets include work from Sailor Jerry Collins, Owen Jensen and Bert Grimm, plus a sheet drawn by Hardy himself at the tender age of 10, labeled Sheet 40! Total Tattoo's own Dr Matt Lodder also provides a short but fascinating history of flash, which is well worth a read. After that, just sit back, enjoy turning the pages and feast on the rich imagery within.

The second volume of the set starts with a short interview with Filip Leu and a collection of flash produced by Leu family members, including work from Filip's parents Don Feliz and Loretta Leu.





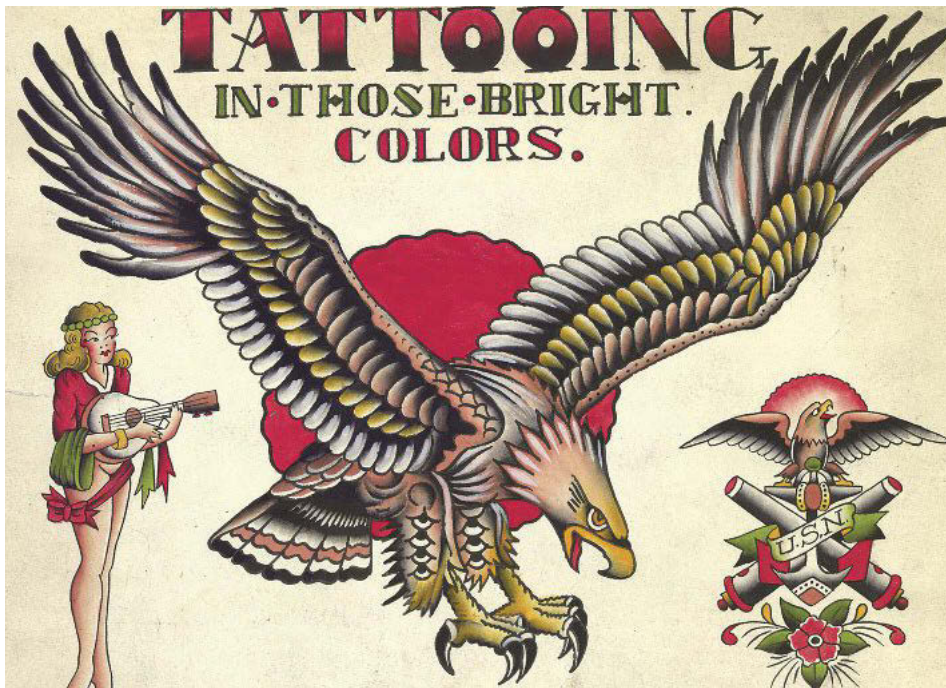
This is followed by a fascinating interview with Piotr Wojciechowski, director of the Polish Tattoo Museum, which offers an interesting insight into the world of tattooing in Eastern Europe. As a special highlight for the book, Piotr provided impressive historical flash sheets from the pioneer days of Polish tattooing.

With these two truly epic volumes, Edition Reuss have once again raised the bar on what tattoo books can be. We spoke with owner of the publishing company, Matthias Reuss, about the project.

What made you choose flash as the subject for these books?

I am a graphic designer so cool artwork and flash has always attracted my





interest. If you are familiar with the previous Edition Reuss books, you might have noticed that I try to include drawings, art and flash from the tattooists as well the tattoo photographs. What makes these two new flash books so amazing is the stunning diversity of styles within them. There is probably something for everyone. In any case, it's a banquet of art for the eyes!

How did you choose the artists to be featured?

The two flash books are in fact a joint project between myself and my Chicano friend and author Edgar Hoill. We both have our own unique contacts, so together we can produce really strong material. My friends within the tattoo scene seem to appreciate the beautiful design and high quality printing of my books, which means they were happy to take part in the project. I gathered together so many great pieces of flash art, as you can see.



Two authors who have written books for me in the past, Marisa Kakoulas from New York and famous 'tattoo hunter' Lars Krutak from Washington, have also been very helpful with their contacts and recommendations. Last but not least, my friends Filip Leu and Ed Hardy, who have Edition Reuss books on their personal bookshelves, have been part of this as well, providing wonderful flash and fantastic interviews.

Do you feel that flash still has a place in the world of custom tattooing?

Personally, I would always want to know that a tattooist is able to draw on paper (or design by computer and then print on paper) what I want to have on my skin. So flash is still a very useful thing for showcasing drawing skills.

What does it mean to you and Edgar to have brought this project to fruition?

After two years of working with Edgar on the

book, we are both were very happy about all the crazy cool contributions we got from our tattoo artists. They are the real stars of these two books! For me, as the designer and publisher, it's a great feeling to have brought to life two more outstanding collectors' items in a world where many people think that everything has already been seen or done. No, that's not the case; life can be full of adventure and discovery, and so beautiful, but only if you stay young and keep your mind open.

Tattoo Masters Flash Collection

Publisher: Edition Reuss

Editors: Edgar Hoill and Matthias Reuss

Website: www.editionreuss.de

Review & Interview by James Sandercock



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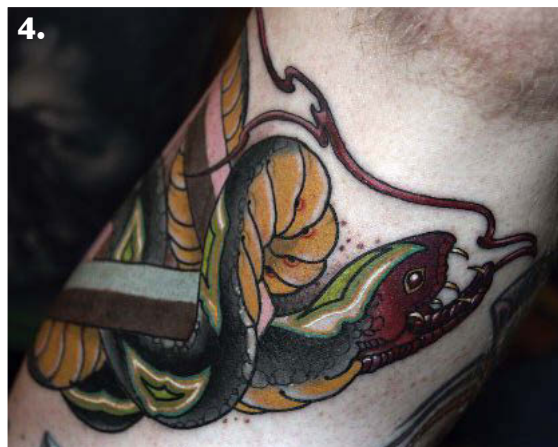
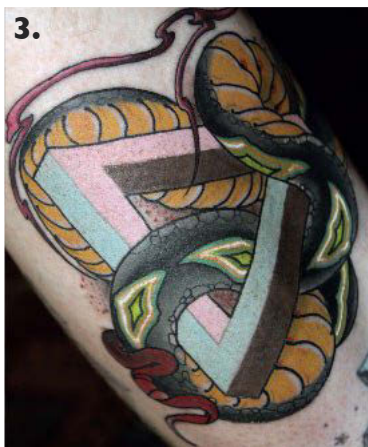
NORTH LAKES TATTOO SHOW

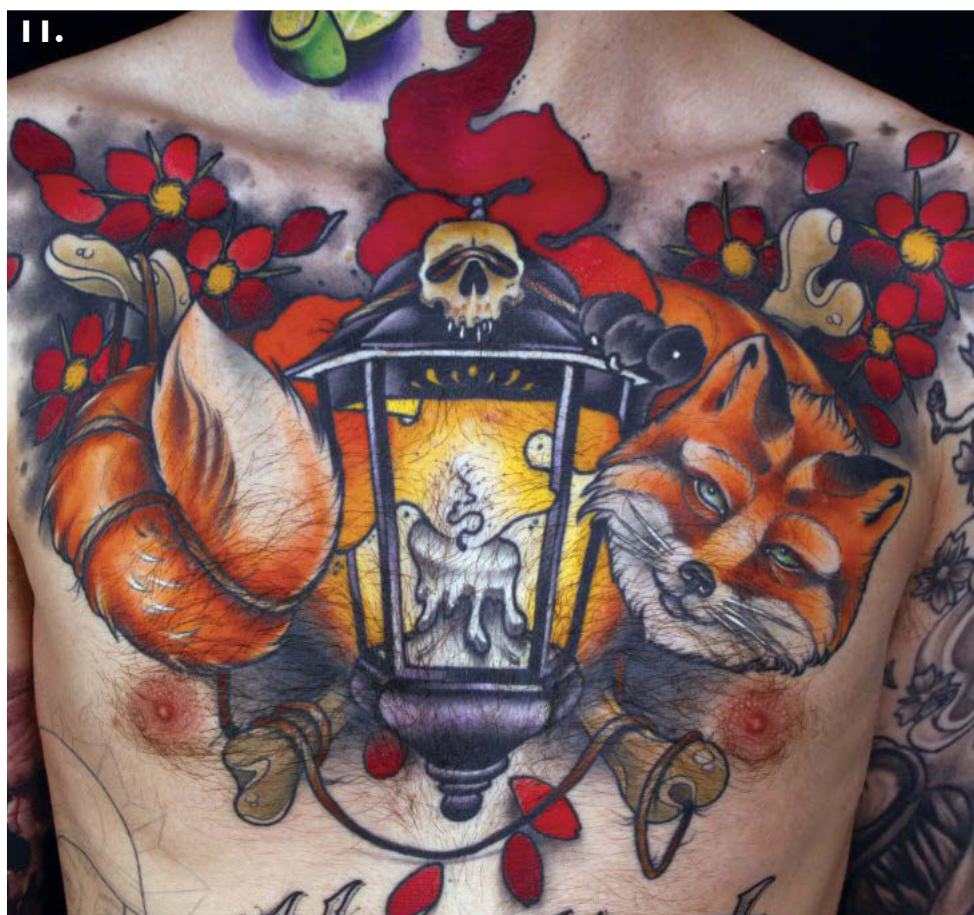
Like an expensive fine wine the North Lakes Tattoo Show continues to mature, getting richer and sweeter with every year. It has been a few years since I've had the opportunity to attend, and I had forgotten just how good this small show is!

The event is based in a large function room attached to The Auctioneer public house on the outskirts of Carlisle in Cumbria. Just one minute from the M6, it couldn't be easier to find. The main hall houses about 50 good sized tattoo booths, with a separate bar as well as a cafe area with hot food available all weekend. Upstairs there were a further dozen or so booths in a much smaller quieter area. Several traders were dotted about the show, selling all sorts of goodies such as t-shirts, jewellery, phone covers and the like. The show is organised by Colin and Mike from Mike's Tattoos in Carlisle. These two guys are extremely well known and well connected, both locally and in the wider tattoo community. The pub is Colin's local and the place where Mike has held many successful boxing and martial arts competitions. All the staff at The Auctioneer are personal friends of theirs, and this helps to create a super-relaxed, friendly vibe that is extended to all their tattoo family for the weekend.

The cast for this northern main feature is individually hand-picked. It's a modest-sized show so it is very much an invite-only affair. Any tattooist wishing to work at it has to send the organisers a disc of pictures to prove their worth. This has the added benefit of ensuring that only really good artists get to tattoo at this show. This year the roster included Stewart Robson and Soap from Modern Electric, Spacey from Bizarre Ink, Billy Hay, Marcus Maguire, Emma and Rizzo from Bath Street Tattoo Collective in Glasgow as well as Gary Weidenhof from Inkredible Kreations, Tem and her crew from Hope and Glory, Ben Stone, Dave Bryant and Teresa Gordon-Wade, who took home one of the coveted prizes, for Best of Day Saturday.

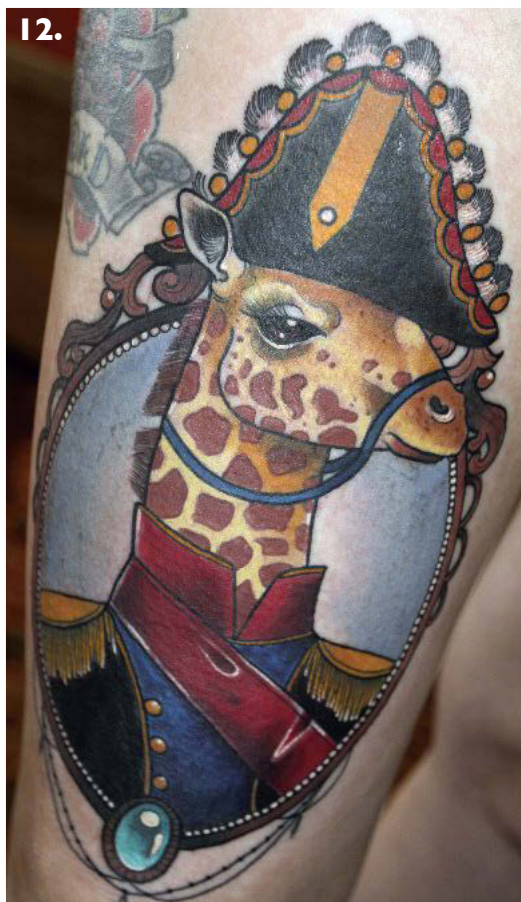
The real unique aspect of this show is the special atmosphere and there is a reason for this: the venue's management doesn't charge anything for the hall and are happy with just the takings from the bar; Colin and Mike



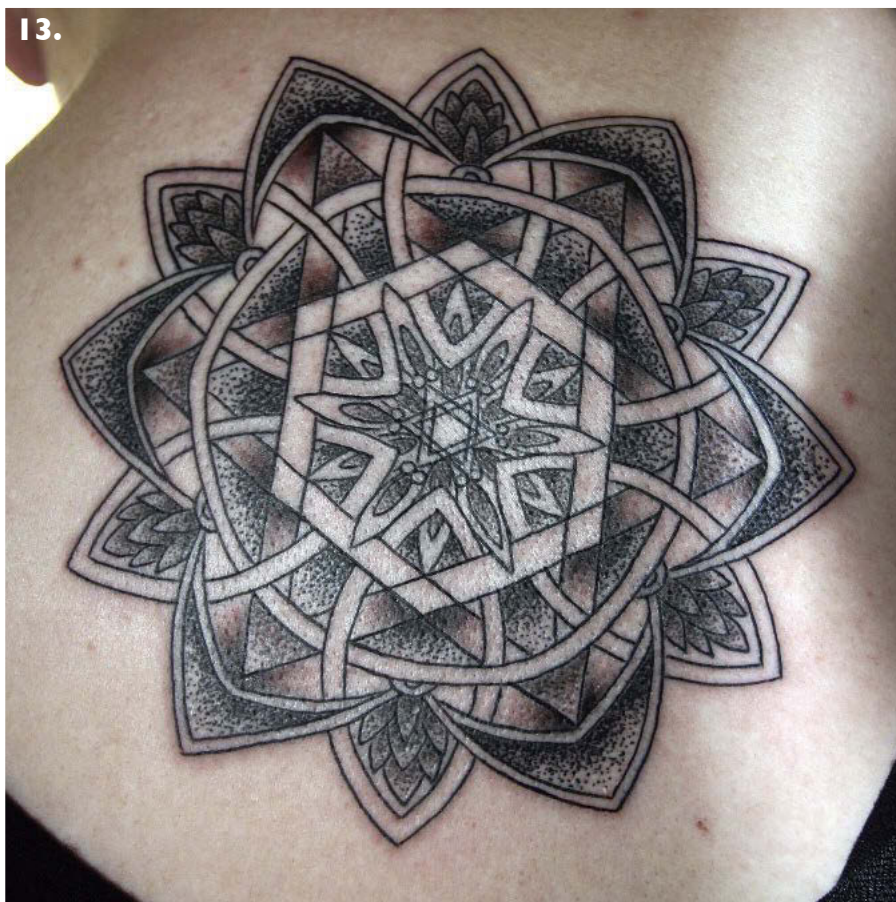


1. jimmie skuse tattooing!
2. by sean crane, alans tattoo
- 3 & 4. by jim gray, bath street
5. by gary weidenhof, inkredible kreations
6. gary weidenhof wins small black & grey
7. by ollie wallace, immortal art
8. by mark bester, marked for life
9. rambo with his fantastic joe graham exhibition
10. by lewis parkin, northside tattooz
11. by billy hay, bath street

12.



13.



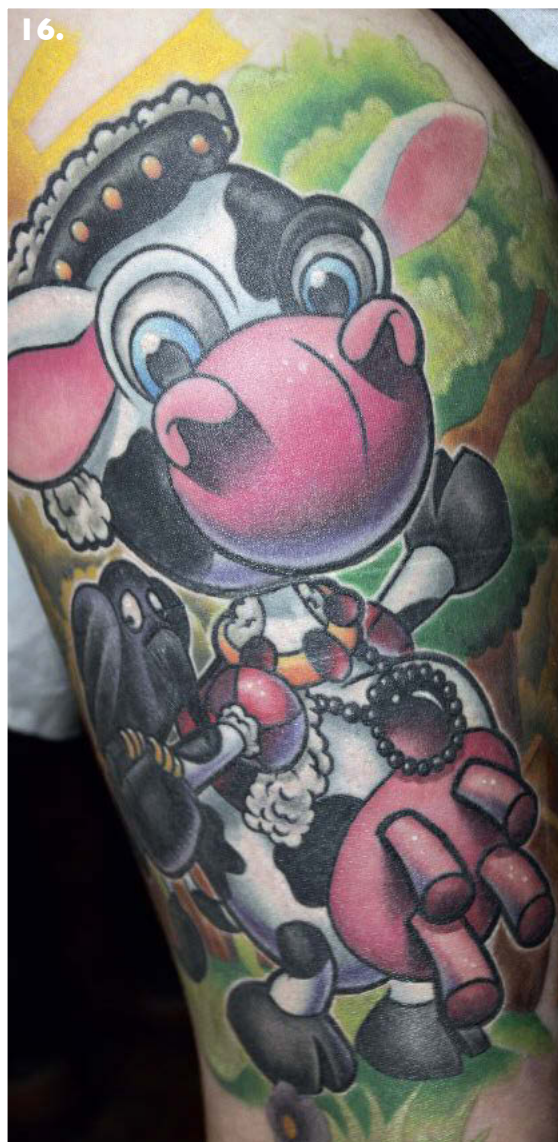
14.



15.



16.



17.



12. ashley luka, the square
 13. dave ashton,
 all style tattoo
 14. dan stone, electric buddha
 15. ben stone,
 ben stone tattoo
 16. leah moule, spear tattoo
 17. rob richardson
 18. reg redmond, triplesix
 19. tem sosa, hope and glory
 20. dean cowley, triplesix
 21. mike stockings,
 legacy ink

therefore pass on the savings to the artists, which means no one is under pressure to earn big bucks; this allows them the freedom not to pre-book appointments; this in turn gives the convention-goer the chance to grab some top drawer tattoos without the hassle of waiting months to get to the front of the queue. It also means that the artists are relaxed and happy to chat and socialise in a way you just don't see at your average tattoo convention. It is a simple philosophy that seems to work exceptionally well.

For the first time this year, the North Lakes show played host to collections from two of the most formidable tattoo museums in the land. Rambo from Manchester brought a fabulous collection of artwork by Sunderland-based old-timer Joe Graham. While he was alive, Graham tattooed and produced amazing artworks that far exceeded the work by other more famous tattooists of the time. Joe Graham was honoured with a posthumous award at the show. It had been hoped that his wife would be there to accept it, but she was unable to attend so Rambo accepted it on her behalf. (Total Tattoo is hoping to bring you some interesting features by Rambo in the future.)

Jimmie Skuse brought a selection of memorabilia from the world famous Skuse Family archive. He was also tattooing for charity all weekend, alongside Jim Gallagher, together they raised a healthy sum for the show's chosen charity for Colitis and Crohn's disease as did Carl Cooke from

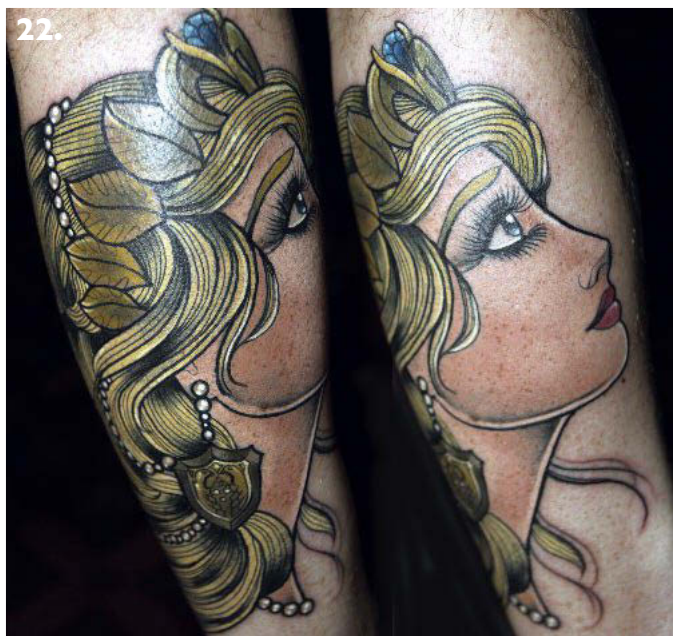
Artful Ink who donated all the money he earned over the weekend. A total of nearly £1000 was raised!

A special guest at North Lakes this year was American tattoo legend Dana Brunson and his wife Dot. They chatted with everyone and were immensely entertaining. At the end of the show Jimmie Skuse presented Dana with a special trophy for the first ever Bristol Tattoo Club lifetime achievement award.

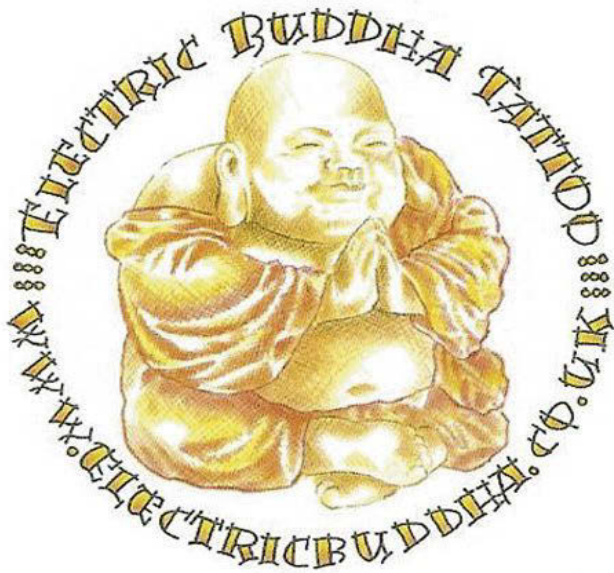
I had the pleasure of chatting with Jimmie about the first ever UK tattoo conventions, which were put on by his grandfather Les Skuse in the early 1950s. I realised that the North Lakes show is the closest you can get to a traditional old school tattoo convention (except it's not in black and white, of course!): a room at the back of a pub where tattooists come to chat, share information and show each other the work they have created, attended by people who really love tattooing and who are not looking for a party (although I do believe alcoholic beverages may have been taken!)

So what are the negative aspects to this show? To be honest, its weaknesses are actually its strengths. It's very small, but that's why people seem to love it. There is no entertainment, but that's why people love it. It's difficult to get a spot to work at it, but that's why people love it. It is hard to find fault when it everything just seems to work fine.





22. charlotte timmons, modern body art
 23. sid siamese, 1961 tattoo (norway)
 24. marcus maguire, bath street tattoo
 25. sile sanda (on the road)
 26. flecky working hard
 27. ashley luka newman collecting her award



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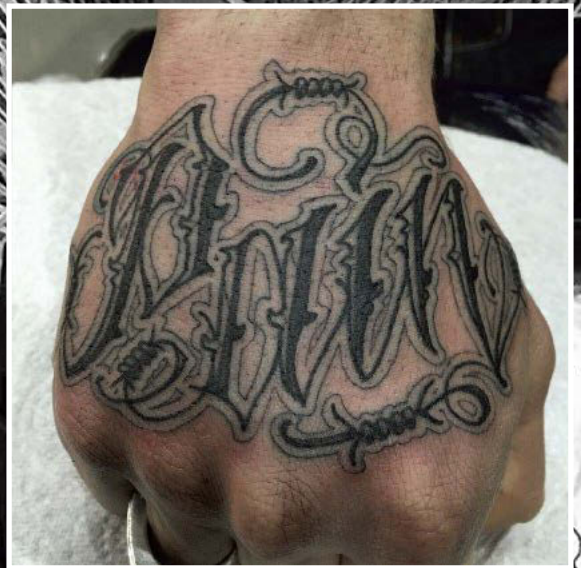
Studio 18 Body Jewellery 28a Townsend Road, Enderby Leicester LE19 4PG



Norm Rise

Norm is, without a doubt, one of the true characters of modern day tattooing. He follows his heart and is not afraid of taking an opportunity – or a risk if necessary – when it comes a-knocking. The way he got his first job as a body piercer is a classic example: while he was getting tattooed, he asked the owner of the shop if they had a piercer. “No” came the reply. The owner then asked Norm if he knew how to pierce. “Sure,” he replied. He left the shop, bought a ‘Pierce Like a Pro’ video and a few other bits and bobs from piercing pioneers Gauntlet, and was in business!





Buying his equipment from Gauntlet took him to San Francisco, which in turn led him to Marcus Pacheco from the legendary Primal Urge Studio, under whom Norm eventually did his tattoo apprenticeship. By that point he was already covered in tattoos and is now on his third bodysuit. Believe me, Norm does not do things by halves.

At the time, Norm was totally consumed by graffiti and the fringe culture that went along with it. "I had a piercing shop next to Art Work Rebels. I had no knowledge of graffiti but I met a few guys from that crew (of which he is now a member) who were fucking insane. They were painting the top ledges of 20 storey buildings, billboards, climbing around in the middle of the night... and I wanted to do that. So I would go out at night and do really disgustingly ugly graffiti in crazy places. The guys would be like, 'Holy shit, Norm. That's a great spot, but it looks horrible! Stick to piercing. We like you, you can hang out with us and you don't need to do graffiti.' But I couldn't stop. Once you have the graffiti bug, it just takes over your brain and destroys you."



From then on, life for Norm was all about stealing, graffiti and drugs. "Those three things. All day, every day. It was like a full-time job for me. Oh and jail, plenty of jail. I was around 23 or 24 years old then. Old enough to know better. I'm 40 now and I just got arrested in Brooklyn. The cops told me 'You're too old for this shit.' I told them 'I'm not, and I'm going to do again, then I'm going to do it again. So you just figure out whatever money you want me to pay you and I'll fucking pay, then I can go on my way.' They were pretty angry because they had to climb a fence and got all dirty. They beat me up, broke my nose, slung me in jail for four days and fined me the grand total of \$140."



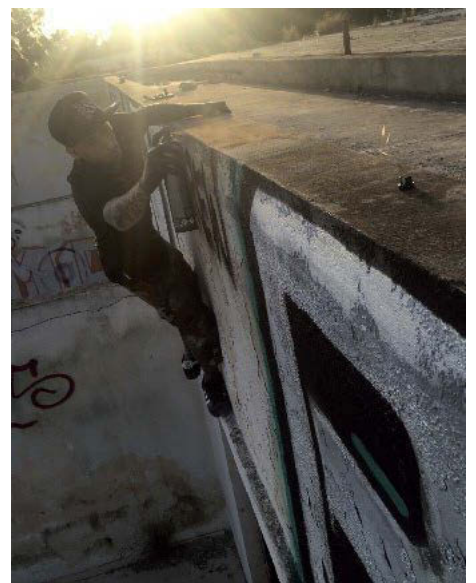


Norm came to tattooing as a career relatively late, despite being heavily into tattoos in the 1990s. He was drawn in by amazing artwork by artists such as Filip Leu, Marcus Pacheco and Jack Rudy, but it wasn't until he hit his thirties that he picked up a machine for the first time. "I'd been doing graffiti for 15 years by this point, and didn't really think that I could draw anything in terms of what I thought a tattoo should be. But Marcus (Pacheco), Grime and Yutaro (Skull & Sword Tattoo) said that if I could do graffiti, I could learn how to tattoo. I didn't think that Marcus was into teaching me at all, but it turned out he wanted to do it. Everything has just worked out amazingly."

At that point Norm had already homed in on artists who were producing script – the style that really fired him up. "I was looking at Jack Rudy, Mr. Cartoon, people whose lettering was just so good. The gang hand was always so interesting to me, because my graffiti crew came from LA, where all gangster lettering originated. Now I have people like Big Sleeps, who are the real deal from the 80s and 90s. They help me understand what it's really all about and the way things work."



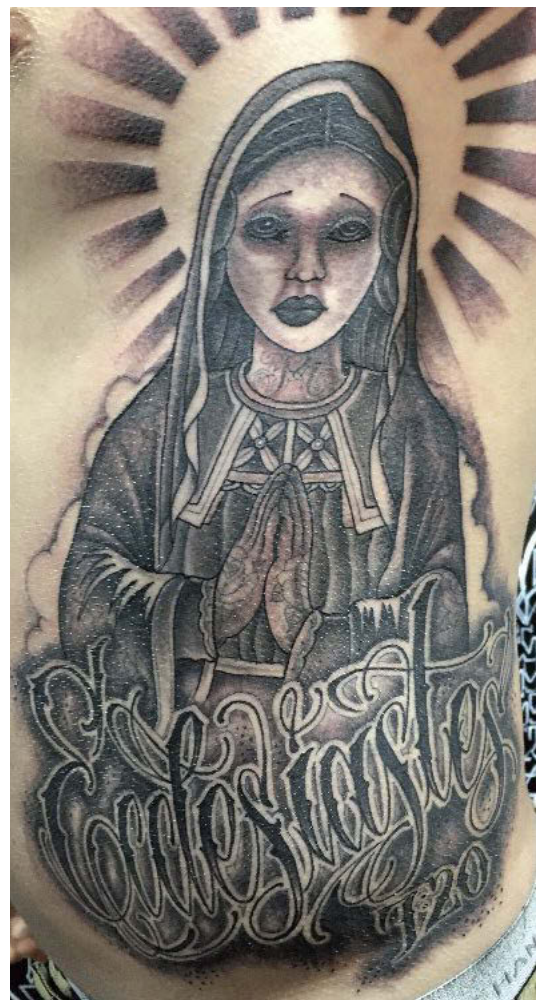
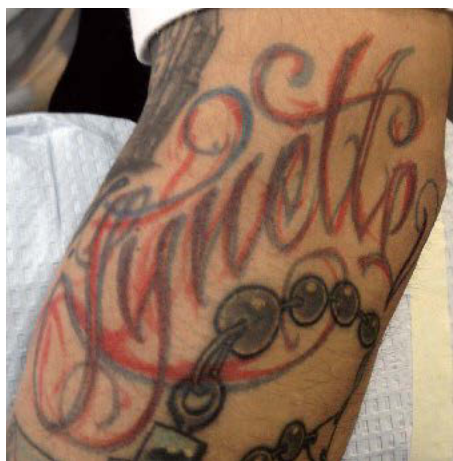
Tattooing and graffiti may be closely related in many ways, but Norm has had to separate his two loves: "Combining them is difficult. You might be doing a lot of graffiti, having a great time and you get really comfortable with a spray painting can. Then it's not so easy when you get back to the tattoo machine. My brain doesn't think of graffiti when I tattoo and vice versa. I want my tattoos to be crisp and clean like a sticker, but with my graffiti I want a fucking mess that says my name so big you can read it from a mile away."



"I now spend much more time with tattooing because I love it, but I do feel like I need to spray in order to be true to myself. I don't want people saying that since Norm started tattooing he doesn't do graffiti anymore. I do as much illegal graffiti as I want. I'm a little more restrained in other countries, but not totally."

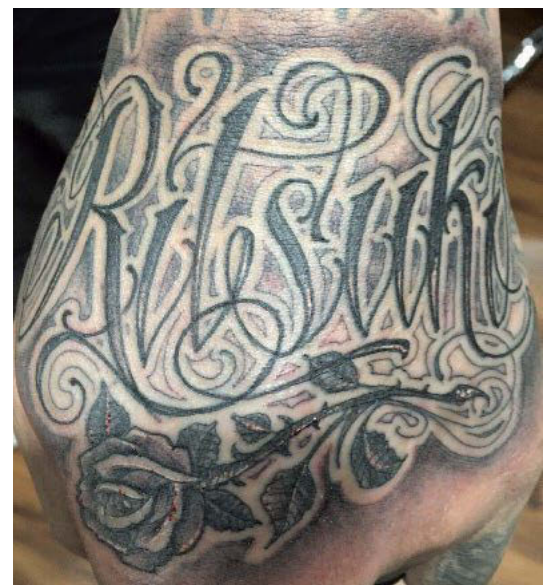
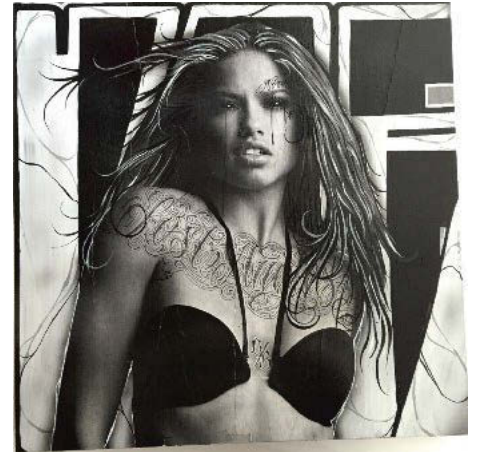
Bearing in mind Norm's love of urban dwelling, his move to Hawaii came as a bit of a surprise, but that phase of his life is coming to an end soon: "LA got a little bit crazy for me so I decided to move. Hawaii is beautiful and I love it but it's a little bit quiet for me. It's made me realise that I'm just not a mellow guy. I need to be in a city, I need hustle and bustle, I need people banging on my door, I need a million phone calls to keep me moving. Idle hands are the devil's plaything. I'm not even good with vacations. I could be sitting on this beautiful beach. Do I go surfing or do I answer my emails? I'll do my emails... not cool, I know. [Laughs]"

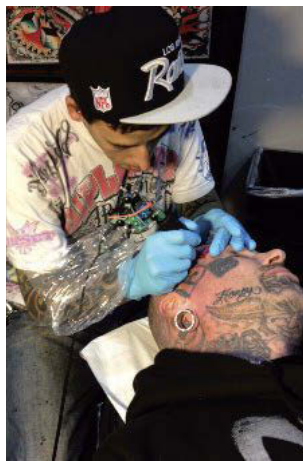
"So now I'm heading back to LA to work in the same shop as I did before. It's a private shop now and it will be just me, Big Sleeps and Edgar Aguirre. I have a lot of big projects in the pipeline. 2015 is very exciting."





Script has always been hot, but it's never been as popular (and recognised as an artform in its own right) as it is at the moment. There have been artists doing incredible lettering for many years, but it's only in the last four or five years that the specialists have pushed their way into the limelight. Along with the good and authentic, of course, comes the watered down, commercial version. I wondered how Norm feels about that. "I have had a lot of conversations with people about this. I make my living from letters. I love them. It's the same with Big Sleeps. He has a company called Letters to Live By, and that is just so true."

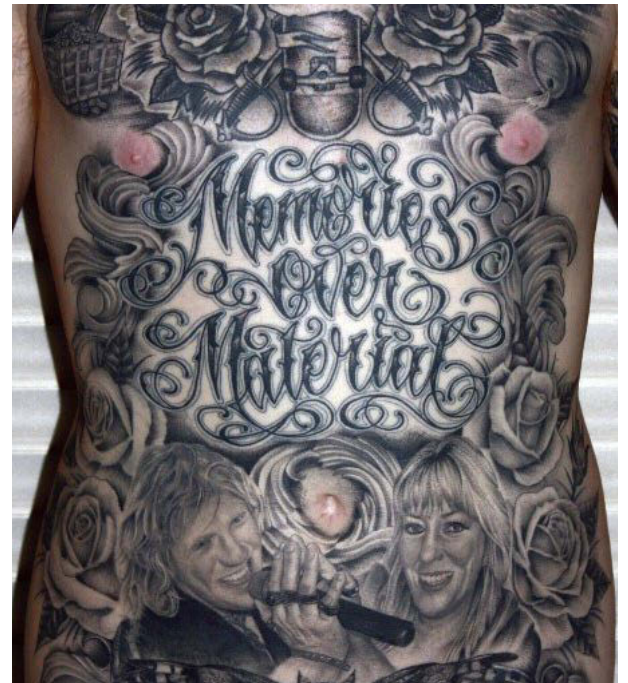




"I work hard to invent these letters and they come from many different influences. It might be a book from the 1830s or some gangster shit I saw when I was walking down the road. That's influence, and you need it. I just had an instance when somebody asked me to take a look at his book. It was just full of drawings that looked exactly like mine. I didn't want to be an asshole, but I wanted to give them some advice. I told them if all they wanted to be was a copy of me, they would never get anywhere. In the same way I wouldn't have got anywhere if I had just copied Jack Rudy's work."

Watering down anything means you run the risk of eventually washing it away completely. Norm's ideas for protecting his lettering are interesting: "In the beginning, we all put out sketch books. That was all right but then you realise what you're giving away; you're kind of saying that copying is OK; and some people aren't using these books as reference, they are just copying your work directly. That was my fault. I now refuse to put out any sketch books. There is nothing that can replace hard work and dedication to something, nor should there be."

To keep up with Norm, head to www.normwillrise.com



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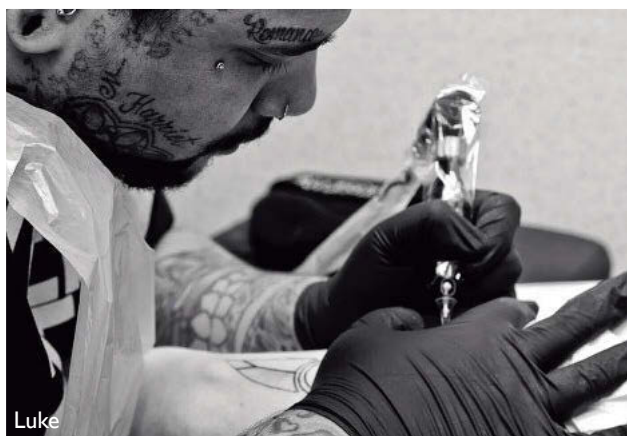
IN FOCUS

In these pages we showcase a small selection of work from a group of artists working together.
This month **Hand on Heart, 1st Floor, 20 Rawson Place, Bradford.**
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We would love to feature your work, please send examples to:
In Focus, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich, NR7 0AU, UK

Ben



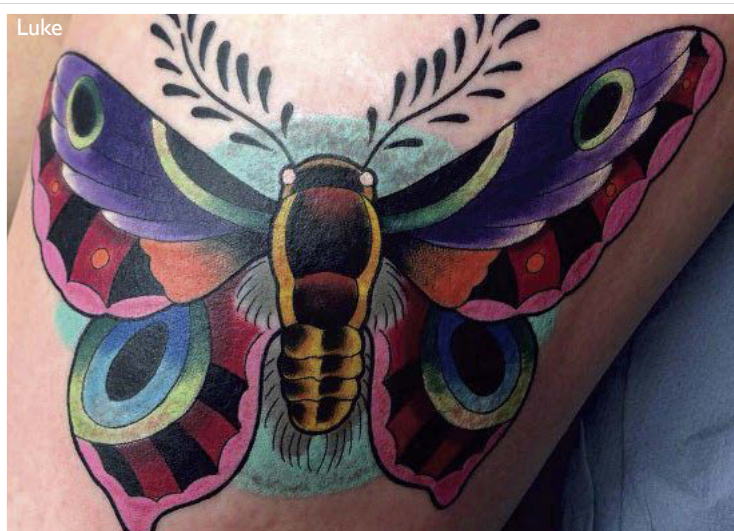
Luke



Luke



Ben



Luke

Luke



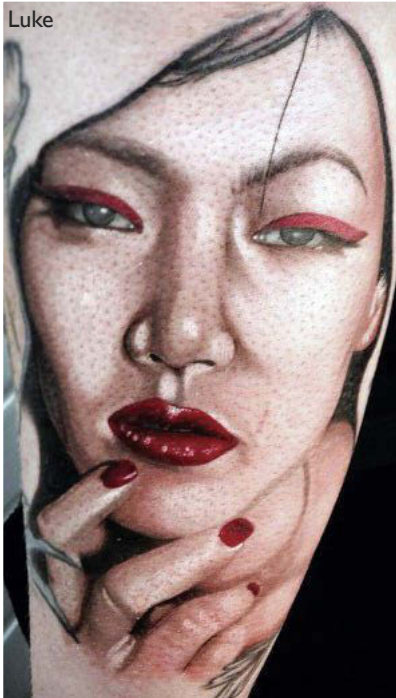
Luke



Ben



Luke



Ben



Ben



Ben



Luke



Luke



CONVENTION CALENDAR

UK CONVENTIONS

July 25-26

Portsmouth Tattoo Convention

Portsmouth Guildhall, Guildhall Square,
Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 2AB
www.portsmouthtattooconvention.com

July 25-26

Cardiff Tattoo and Toy Convention

Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel and Spa
24-26 Newport Rd, Caerdydd, Cardiff,
South Glamorgan CF24 0DD
www.cardiffattooandtoycon.co.uk/

July 31-Aug 2

2nd Titanic International Tattoo Convention

1 Olympic Way, Queens Rd, Titanic Quarter,
BT3 9EP Belfast
www.facebook.com/titanic.tattooconventionbel
fast14

August 1-2

Bedford International Tattoo Convention

Bedford Corn Exchange, St Pauls Square,
Bedford MK40 1SL
Tel: 01234 930504

August 14-16

Tatcon Tattoo Convention

Norbreck Castle Hotel
Queen's Promenade, Blackpool,
Lancashire FY2 9AA
www.tatconblackpool.co.uk

August 15-16

Norwich Body Arts Festival

Open, 20 Bank Plain, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 4SF
www.norwichbodyartfestival.co.uk

August 22-23

Robin Hood Tattoo Festival

Cotgrave Welfare Club, Woodview, Cotgrave,
Nottinghamshire NG12 3PJ
www.robinhoodtattoofestival.co.uk

September 13

Female Tattoo Show

The Assembly, Spencer Street, Leamington Spa
CV31 3NF

September 25-27

International London Tattoo Convention

Tobacco Dock, 50 Porters Walk, London E1W 2SF
www.thelondontattooconvention.com

October 10-11

Milton Keynes Tatoo Convention

Planet Ice Milton Keynes
Leisure Plaza, 1 South Row
Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK9 1DL

Oct 30-Nov 1

Jurassic Coast Tattoo Convention

Premier Inn Hotel Bournemouth Central
Westover Rd, Bournemouth,
Dorset BH1 2BZ,
www.jurassiccoasttattooconvention.co.uk

Nov 7-8

Halloween Tattoo Bash

Wolverhampton Racecourse
Holiday Inn Garden Court
Dunstable Park Lodge, Wolverhampton WV6 0PE
www.halloweentattoobash.co.uk

November 14-15

Sheffield Tattoo Show

Magna Science Centre, Sheffield Road,
Templeborough, Rotherham
South Yorkshire S60 1DX
www.sheffieldtattooshow.co.uk

UK CONVENTIONS 2016

March 5-6

The Tattoo Tea Party

Phoenix Way, Off Barton Dock Road, Urmston
Manchester. M41 7TB
www.tattooteaparty.co.uk

April 31-1 May

The Brighton Centre

King's Rd, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 2GR
blog.brightontattoo.com

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

August 7-9

Berlin Tattoo Convention

Arena Berlin, Eichen Strasse 4, 12435 Treptow,
Germany
www.tattoo-convention.de

September 12-13

Galway Tattoo Show

Radisson Hotel, Lough Atalia Road, Galway, Ireland
www.facebook.com/galwaytattooshow

September 18-20

3rd Annual Steel City Tattoo Convention

David L Lawrence Convention Center
located at 1000 Ft Duquense Blvd
Pittsburgh PA 15222 USA
www.shaneoneillproductions.com

Oct 9-11

Florence Tattoo Convention

Fortezza Da Basso
Viale Filippo Strozzi, 1
50129 Florence, Italy
www.florenceconvention.com

Oct 30-Nov 1

Dublin Tattoo Convention

Red Cow Moran Hotel Dublin
22 Naas Rd, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin, Ireland
www.dublintoconvention.com

November 1

Tattoo Sunday - Brugge

Studio Hall, Boogschutterslaan 41, Sint-Kruis
Brugge, Belgium
www.brusselstattooconvention.be

November 13-15

Brussels International Tattoo Convention

Tour & Taxis, Avenue du Port 86,
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Backpiece

Paul Talbot
Modern Electric Tattoo Company
The Song Remains the Same

I was asked to write this Backpiece about a month ago and, having procrastinated about it to epic proportions, I currently find myself behind the deadline by about half a day and still trying to find something to write about...

What's the problem, you may ask. I have to admit that it's one I haven't ever faced before. For the first time in my life, I have no opinion about anything (relevant) and I simply have nothing to say. I've asked myself 'Is that because I just don't care anymore?' or is it because I'm simply talked out?

The answer to the first question is no. I can honestly say that I do care. In fact I care very deeply about tattooing – it is my passion and my livelihood; it's an artform that I find continually fascinating and endlessly challenging. Also, the people I've met whilst on my tattoo journey are some of my closest and dearest friends. I care very much about them and cherish the – albeit short – times we get to spend together.

Am I all talked out? Well, you're still reading this column 192 words in, so probably not!

So I asked myself 'What don't I care about?' I don't care what the subject of this week's argument is. Mainly because all those www. discussions are just a circular re-hash of last decade's/year's/week's argument. It's a dusty old merry-go-round, where your opinion will depend on how many times you've gone round.

Take a look back at any industry magazine from any point in recent history, and you'll soon realise that there have always been too many scratchers; that no-one does proper apprenticeships anymore; customers still aren't informed enough; tattooists still don't understand their equipment properly; that the new stuff isn't nearly as reliable as the old stuff; whatever the latest style is, it won't heal properly and – as ever – the new traditionalists (just like the old traditionalists) are proclaiming 'It's not how it was when I started'.

I, like a lot of others, bought my ticket to ride a long time ago. I've seen and heard it all at least once before and I'm not likely to be swayed by your opinion or take you any more seriously because you have loads of 'Likes' on Facebook. I'm also uninterested in who sponsors you or how many followers you have on Instagram / Twitter / Pinterest etc etc.

I don't care about what's being said but I do care why it's being said. The web arguments rage on and on because people sincerely want to protect tattooing from what they perceive to be a new evil.

I'm simply well-read enough and long enough in the tooth to realise that the evil isn't new at all. Trying to solve all the problems in the world of tattooing by digitally jumping up and down and stamping your feet, whilst 'flaming' each other all over wherever the latest fashionable www. hangout is, is about as effective as trying to solve a maths problem by chewing bubblegum.

What's the answer then?

If I can answer that question in the 300 words I have left I'll be doing something that has never been done in tattooing ever, so don't hold your breath! But, for what it's worth...

"Things really get no worse or better"

– Bill Baker, Machinegun magazine
editorial, November 2002

Firstly, if tattooing is worth protecting (and, in my opinion, it is), but we're still saying the same old stuff about the same old problems, how do we move out of the loop?

Start small, is my thought. It's easy just to think global these days rather than local, but if everyone involved in tattooing – and I count clients in this too, as you are as important to the world of tattooing as the artists themselves – does their part then maybe we can fix a few of the smaller problems. If we can do that then maybe, just maybe, the big stuff will take care of itself.

If you're a tattooer, spend a little time educating your clients instead of staring them down sullenly from the confines of your booth. Spend a little time actually talking to people about good studio etiquette, how to approach an artist about getting work done and good aftercare. Don't be afraid to recommend other artists when you're asked about designs outside your own style. It's my



experience that this leads to greater networking between tattooers and – in some cases – amazing collaborations.

If you're a client, then please help educate your tattooed, un-tattooed and soon-to-be tattooed friends in the same way. It really helps us out if a new client has at least a little prior knowledge about the different ways in which we like to work on designs, and doesn't apply a 'one size fits all' approach to all tattooists.

We'll still be arguing about the same old stuff this time next year, but at least we might be a little better informed.

Until next time. Sorry I had nothing to say.

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